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ON INDOLENCE.

MAN appears to be the only being in creation whose exertions exceed his necessities; who is urged to action by other calls than the imperious commands of natural appetites and desires. To other animals a state of rest is a state of choice; to him, of uneasiness; and he is frequently roused to action, not so much from the impulses of passion, as from a wish to avoid the tediousness and languor of inactivity. Hence we observe that no man is so determinately idle as to forego all employment; and those whom indolence discourages from useful and noble pursuits, yet seek some more trifling and frivolous avocations to cheat the wearisome hours of idleness. No man complains so frequently of the tediousness of time, as he whom neither necessity or choice stimulates to exertion, and no one is more frequently fatigued than he who does nothing. How many thousands are there who wake in the morning, only to wish the arrival of night, when they may again sleep; who saunter about, because to sit is insupportable; who take up a book, because they cannot think, and throw it down because it is unamusing; who fly to companions in whose society there is no pleasure, because they dread solitude; and who plunge into vice and dissipation, because the tedious uniformity of inactive virtue is disgusting! How many are there, whose mornings are passed in anxious solicitude for the evening, be-

cause they can only be pleased by forgetting themselves in the roar of inebriety, and the frantic laugh of riot! The evening, indeed, is the holiday of the idler of both sexes; the lady may enjoy a cessation of *ennui* in the scandal and tittle-tattle of the tea-table, and the dresses and company of the theatre; and any man may drink, though he dares not reflect, may jest, though he cannot study, and lose in the Lethe of Bacchus, the remembrance of the morrow, and the consciousness of his worthlessness.

To those accustomed to a habit of indolence, the idea of exertion is connected with the idea of pain: to a mind enervated by the indulgence of idle amusements, danger appears to attend on every motion, and difficulty on every enterprise. That which is beheld by a soul in the vigour of activity, as yielding with facility to the energy of determined resolution, will, to the sickly eye of indolence, be magnified into impracticability. Such a mind is not aware, that to the exertions of fortitude and assiduity, few objects oppose a formidable barrier; and that he who has a fixed and determinate point in view, and who strives with industry and unrelaxing perseverance to reach it, will seldom be disappointed of success. Nor is this exertion so great or so laborious as may be supposed. As a body in motion is carried forward after the impulse has ceased, by the acquired force, so does every advance, after the first, become progressively more easy, and require less additional force; while, on the contrary, the pleasures resulting are in a progressional increase; for the consciousness of laudable pursuits increases with the increase of progress; and every step introduces us to new advantages; and of course, to new encouragements to proceed; as a man ascending a hill, is induced by the widening extent of prospect at every advance, to advance still further, and repeat his labour that he may repeat his gratification.

Would they, who by the invidious gifts of fortune, and the syren blandishments of idleness, are condemned to all the satiety of luxury and ease; who, fatigued by the vacuity of their own minds, seek for amusement in frivolous occupations and trifling or dissipated society, and who fly from insipidity and disgust, to riot, debauchery, and vice; would they advance one step in a different road, and taste the delights of industry and active virtue, they would discover that the man who is laudably employed, is scarcely subject to uneasiness or pain; that he who is busied in the

cause of genius, of virtue, or of truth, may scorn the evils that depress the depraved or inactive, and armed in conscious merit may defy the power of accidents to injure, or dangers to terrify him: his days are days of peace and cheerfulness, his nights tranquil and composed; his life is happy, and his death lamented.

Among the number who complain of the tediousness of time and the weariness of lassitude, it may not be unreasonable to expect that some may be willing to listen to methods that shall quicken the one and relieve the other. Let such, if any such there are, reflect that he whose faculties are assiduously employed is too busy to think of the flight of moments, and watch with anxious impatience the finger of the clock: that he who can review, with conscious triumph, useful acquisitions and advantages, the produce of his own exertions, cannot feel the fatigue of indolence, and will not regret the fatigue of labour. Let them reflect that every idle man wishes to be busy, and that no busy man wishes to be idle; for it is a fact, almost without an exception, that no man accustomed to habits of employment regrets his assiduity, or would be content to sink into a trifler and a cypher. Let them reflect that a life of idleness is a life of insignificance and contempt; that every one scorns the man who degrades himself by indolence and inactivity; that he is useless to his friends, despised by his enemies, and forgotten by the world. On the contrary, a man bending his faculties to the service of virtue and public utility; a man who improves the manners or contributes to the felicity of mankind, is an object of reverence and esteem to all within the sphere of his activity; the world respects and admires him; he is, through all his connections, honoured and beloved. Let then him whose hours linger in the insipid tediousness of lassitude, who is weary of the fatigue of doing nothing, and ashamed of insignificance; let him stimulate his faculties to activity and energy, and apply with determined vigour and perseverance to some useful and laudable pursuits: let him strive, if he have abilities and acquisitions for the task, to benefit and mend mankind; or at least let him benefit and mend himself, and diffuse pleasure around him, in a circle proportioned to his power, by benevolence; then let him exult in the praise of his own heart, and the consciousness of his own worth: let him triumph in the esteem of his

fellow-beings, and the approbation of his God. A man thus formed to act and to think, to spend his life in the advancement of science, the improvement of mankind, and the communication of happiness, whose time is employed in the unceasing use of his faculties, and the energy of virtue, is the boast of the world, the delight of the Almighand the perfection of human nature!

T.

On the Employment of Time.

[From Gisborne's Enquiry into the duties of the Female Sex.]

TO occupy the mind with useful employments is among the best methods of guarding it from surrendering itself to dissipation. To occupy it with such employments regularly, is among the best methods of leading it to love them. Young women sometimes complain, and more frequently the complaint is made for them, that they have nothing to do. Yet few complaints are urged with less foundation. To prescribe, to a young person of the female sex the precise occupations to which she should devote her time, is impossible. It would be to attempt to limit, by inapplicable rules, what must vary according to circumstances which cannot previously be ascertained. Differences in point of health, of intellect, of taste, and a thousand nameless particularities of family occurrences and local situation, claim, in each individual case, to be taken into the account. Some general reflections, however, may be offered.

I advert not yet to the ocupations which flow from the duties of matrimonial life. When, to the rational employments open to all women, the entire superintendence of domestic œconomy is added; when parental cares and duties press forward to assume the high rank in a mother's breast to which they are entitled; to complain of the difficulty of finding proper methods of occupying time, would be a lamentation which nothing but politeness could preserve from being received by the auditor with a smile. But

in what manner, I hear it replied, are they that are not wives and mothers to busy themselves? Even at present young women in general, notwithstanding all their efforts to quicken and enliven the slow-paced hours, appear, if we may judge from their countenances and their language, not unfrequently to feel themselves unsuccessful. If dress, then, and what is called dissipation, are not to be allowed to fill so large a space in the course of female life as they now overspread; and your desire to curtail them in the exercise of this branch of their established prerogative is, by no means, equivocal; how are well-bred women to support themselves in the single state through the dismal vacuity that seems to await them? This question it may be sufficient to answer by another. If young and well-bred women are not accustomed, in their single state, regularly to assign a large proportion of their hours to serious and instructive occupations; what prospect, what hope is there that, when married, they will assume habits to which they have ever been strangers, and exchange idleness and volatility for steadiness and exertion.

To every woman, whether single or married, the habit of regularly allotting to improving books a portion of each day, and, as far as may be practicable, at stated hours, cannot be too strongly recommended. Let history, biography, poetry, or some of the various branches of elegant and profitable knowledge, pay their tribute of instruction and amusement. But let her studies be confined within the strictest limits of purity. Let whatever she peruses in her most private hours, be such as she needs not to be ashamed of reading aloud to those whose good opinion she is most anxious to deserve.

There is one species of writing which obtains, from a considerable proportion of the female sex, a reception much more favourable than is accorded to other kinds of composition more worthy of encouragement. It is unnecessary to add the name of romances. Works of this nature not unfrequently deserve the praise of ingenuity, of plan, and contrivance, of accurate and well-supported discrimination of character, and of force and elegance of language. Some have professedly been composed with a design to favour the interests of morality. And among those which are deemed to have on the whole a moral tendency, a very few perhaps might be selected which are not liable to the

disgraceful charge of being contamined occasionally by incidents and passages unfit to be presented to the reader; a charge so very generally to be alledged with justice, that even of the novels which possess great and established reputation, some are totally improper, in consequence of such, admixture to be perused by the eye of delicacy. Poor, indeed, are the services rendered to virtue by a writer, however he may boast that the object of his performance is to exhibit the vicious as infamous and unhappy, who in tracing the progress of vice to infamy and unhappiness, introduces the reader to scenes and language adapted to wear away the quick feelings of modesty, which form at once the ornament and the safeguard of innocence; and like the bloom upon a plumb, if once effaced, commonly disappear for ever.

Let it be observed that in exact correspondence with the increase of a passion for reading novels, an aversion to reading of a more improving nature will gather strength. There is yet another consequence too important to be overlooked. The catastrophe and the incidents of romances commonly turn on the vicissitudes and effects of a passion the most powerful of all those which agitate the human heart. Hence the study of them frequently creates a susceptibility of impression, and a premature warmth of tender emotions, which, not to speak of other possible effects, have been known to betray young women into a sudden attachment to persons unworthy of their affection, and thus to hurry them into marriages terminating in unhappiness.

In addition to the regular habit of useful reading the custom of committing to the memory select and ample portions of poetic compositions, not for the purpose of ostentatiously quoting them in mixed company, but for the sake of private improvement, deserves, in consequence of its beneficial tendency, to be mentioned with a very high degree of praise. The mind is thus stored with a lasting treasure of sentiments and ideas, combined by writers of transcendent genius and vigorous imagination, clothed in appropriate, nervous, and glowing language, and impressed by the powers of cadence and harmony. Let the poetry, however, be well chosen. Let it be such as elevates the heart with the ardour of devotion, adds energy and grace to precepts of morality, kindles benevolence by pathetic narrative and reflection, enters with natural and lively description into the varieties of character, or presents vivid pictures of what

is grand or beautiful in the scenery of nature. Such are in general the works of Milton, of Thomson, of Gray, of Mason, and of Cowper. It is thus that the beauty and grandeur of nature will be contemplated with new pleasure. It is thus that taste will be called forth, exercised, and corrected. It is thus that judgment will be strengthened, virtuous emotions cherished, piety animated and exalted. At all times, and under every circumstance, the heart penetrated with religion, will delight itself in the recollection of passages, which display the perfections of that Being on whom it trusts, and the glorious hopes to which it aspires. When affliction weighs down the spirits, or sickness the strength, it is then that their cheering influence will be doubly felt. When old age, disabling the sufferer from the frequent use of books, obliges the mind to turn inward upon itself; the memory, long retentive, even in its decay, of the acquisitions which it had attained and valued in its early vigour, still suggests the lines which have again and again diffused rapture through the bosom of health, and are yet capable of overspreading the hours of decrepitude and the couch of pain with consolation.

But it is not from books alone that a considerate young woman is to seek her gratifications. The discharge of relative duties, and the exercise of benevolence, form additional sources of activity and enjoyment. To give delight in the affectionate intercourse of domestic society; to relieve a parent in the superintendence of family affairs; to smooth the bed of sickness, and cheer the decline of age; to examine into the wants and distresses of the female inhabitants of the neighbourhood; to promote useful institutions for the comfort of mothers, and for the instruction of children; and to give to those institutions that degree of attention, which, without requiring either much time or much personal trouble, will facilitate their establishment and extend their usefulness: these are employments congenial to female sympathy; employments in the precise line of female duty; employments which diffuse genuine and lasting consolation among those whom they are designed to benefit, and never fail to improve the heart of her who is engaged in them.

In pointing out what ought to be done, let justice be rendered to what has been done. In the discharge of the

domestic offices of kindness, and in the exercise of charitable and friendly regard to the neighbouring poor, women in general are exemplary. In the latter branch of christian virtue, an accession of energy has been witnessed within a few years. Many ladies have shewn, and still continue to shew, their earnest solicitude for the welfare of the wretched and the ignorant, by spontaneously establishing schools of industry and of religious instruction; and, with a still more beneficial warmth of benevolence, have taken the regular inspection of them upon themselves. May they stedfastly persevere, and be imitated by numbers!

Among the employments of time, which, though regarded with due attention by many young women, are more or less neglected by a considerable number, moderate exercise in the open air claims to be noticed. Sedentary confinement in hot apartments on the one hand, and public diversions frequented, on the other, in buildings still more crowded and stifling, are often permitted so to occupy the time as by degrees even to wear away the relish for the freshness of a pure atmosphere, for the beauties and amusements of the garden, and for those "rural sights and rural sounds," which delight the mind uncorrupted by idleness, folly, or vice. Enfeebled health, a capricious temper, low and irritable spirits, and the loss of many pure and continually recurring enjoyments, are among the consequences of such misconduct.

But though books obtain their reasonable portion of the day, though health has been consulted, the demands of duty fulfilled, and the dictates of benevolence obeyed, there will yet be hours remaining unoccupied hours for which no specific employment has yet been provided. For such hours it is not the intention of these pages to prescribe any specific employment. What if some space be assigned to the useful and elegant arts of female industry? But is industry to possess them all? Let the innocent amusements which home furnishes claim their share. It is a claim which shall cheerfully be allowed. Do amusements abroad offer their pretensions? Neither shall they, on proper occasions, be unheard, a well regulated life will never know a vacuum sufficient to require an immoderate share of public amusements to fill it.

THE MONK OF THE GROTTO.

(*Continued from Page* 37.)

DISGUSTED at a world which was now become insupportable to him, and wishing to consecrate his days wholly to meditation and retirement, he assumed the religious habit in the Monastery of Celestins. Having communicated his resolution to the Cardinal Caprara, he entreated him to inform his mother, as he felt himself unable to write to her directly. He then disposed of all his property in favour of the Convent where he intended to pass the remainder of his days, with the exception of Torre Vecchia, which he left to Rosalia Vizzani; and a considerable farm he gave to the faithful Laurina, as a recompence for the tender attachment she had always expressed towards Virginia.

More than ten years elapsed, during which he constantly refused all the offers of the Cardinal Caprara, who was anxious to see him invested with the first dignities of the Church. When he pronounced the vows of religious seclusion, he had assumed the name of Carlo. It was that of his uncle; and he experienced a secret satisfaction in bearing it. That name seemed to recal to him the virtues and distinguished merit of the respectable and worthy man who had ever shewn him marks of the sincerest tenderness.

He also preserved an unfeigned affection towards Rosalia, though she was the innocent cause of his misfortune; and he experienced an emotion of joy when that amiable and interesting girl, free by the death of her father to dispose of her hand, wrote him word that she had rewarded the constancy of the Marquis Justiniani by becoming his bride.

Count Vizzani, enraged at finding how much he had deceived himself in the idea that Eugenio, after having lost all hopes of obtaining Virginia, would consent to become the husband of Rosalia—disappointed in the prospect of being created a Prince through the credit of the Cardinal Caprara, in the event of that Prelate's nephew marrying his daughter, sought other means of satisfying his inordinate ambition. He at last considered that the marriage of

Rosalia with the son of the Prince San Severo, would give him the same credit at the Court of Naples, as he would have procured at Rome by an alliance with Eugenio. He delayed not to signify his intentions to his daughter; but the firmness with which she refused to obey him, drew on her the utmost excess of his rage. He threatened to shut her up in a Convent, and had even begun to take measures to carry his resolution into effect, when Death put an end to his ambitious career, and he was suddenly carried off by an apoplectic fit.

The Marchioness Spanozzi, having fixed her residence at Bologna, abandoned herself to every species of dissipation, not perhaps less to amuse her time, than to stifle that remorse which incessantly tormented her. Far from enjoying the complete success of her machinations, the remembrance of her treachery towards the innocent Virginia, the death of that unfortunate girl, which she now contemplated as the result of that barbarity which had deceived her with respect to the pretended infidelity of Eugenio, was a constant source of despair, or rather of a train of horrid reflections which tormented her even in her sleep. Having no longer any interest in restraining herself in the presence of her husband, she abandoned herself without reserve to the natural depravity of her disposition. Fretful, perverse, and jealous to excess, that woman, who had always appeared to possess the mildness of an angel, was transformed to a Fury. Perpetually at variance with the Marquis, she suffered him not to enjoy a moment's repose, but constantly loaded him with reproaches; threw the entire blame of the death of Virginia on him, ridiculed the weakness which had suffered him to sacrifice his daughter, subjected him to every species of humiliation, and disgusted him by her whole conduct. At length the unhappy Marquis, reduced to a state of despair, cursed the hour he had united his destiny to that of so wicked a woman, thought of his first wife, was moved even to tears when he compared her mildness, her virtues, and her tenderness towards him with the moroseness, selfishness, and unfeeling conduct of the woman who had succeeded her. His whole thoughts were employed upon the means of relieving himself from the dreadful misery to which he was condemned by passing his days with her.

A fatal event soon deprived him of the only consolation the earth afforded him. The young Spanozzi, his darling

and only son, whose dawning merit announced that he would be a worthy brother of Eugenio and Virginia, was attacked by a small-pox of the most malignant kind, and expired in his arms the ninth day after he was seized with that cruel disorder.

The Marquis driven to despair, abandoned himself to a degree of grief bordering upon absolute delirium. He had not only lost his son, but with him the hope of enjoying that fortune, for the sake of which he had sacrificed every thing, even his peace of mind. In vain would he resume with his wife that deceitful mask which had seduced them both for such a number of years. The Marquis preserved too recent a remembrance of her late proceedings towards him. He sued for a separation, allowed her that part of her estate he had received at her marriage, and retired to a Monastery of Carmelites, situated in the Apennines, on the frontiers of Tuscany; gave his whole fortune to that Convent, and there passed the rest of his days in lamenting the loss of his first wife, his daughter, and his son.

Eugenio, who was informed of all these events in his retreat, pitied the Marquis, regretted the death of his young brother, because he was the brother of Virginia, and detached himself more than ever from the world. Solely occupied with the duties of his situation, he endeavoured, by fulfilling them with zeal, to calm the consuming grief which incessantly oppressed his heart. The remembrance of his dear lost Virginia pursued him even to the foot of the altar; she was ever present to his imagination, and her name was incessantly on his lips. Sometimes in the midst of the most awful ceremonies of religion, he thought he heard the enchanting accents of her sweet voice. Incapable of alleviating the trouble that oppressed him, he would rush, in frantic despair, out of the Church, and traverse the circle of the walls of the Convent, in which reposed the inanimate remains of her who had been so dear to him. Deep sighs would then burst from his heaving bosom; he would suddenly stop, address his fervent prayers to Heaven, and afterwards return to deposit, in the friendly breast of Father Genaro, his regrets, his remembrances, and his griefs.

This violent state of agitation, and the efforts he continually made to submit with resignation to the will of Heaven, destroyed his health. A dreadful emaciation succeeded the graceful form of his noble and elegant person. His pale

and hollow cheeks, his grave and serious deportment, so materially altered him from what he had formerly been, that his nearest friends would scarce have known him.

Father Genaro, who ever preserved the same line of conduct towards him, and who was ever affectionate and indulgent, afforded him the only consolation he was capable of enjoying. One evening, when he was seated by that respected and worthy friend, who was confined to his bed by a violent fit of the gout, and reading to him a few chapters of the Bible, in order to beguile his sufferings, a servant delivered a letter to Father Genaro from the Abbess of San Cipriano.

The venerable Monk, after having perused it, said to Eugenio—"You know, my friend, that I am the Abbess's Confessor. She desires to see me immediately upon an affair which she assures me is of the most important nature; but as she is aware I am ill, she requests that one of our Fathers, of whom I shall approve, may come in my stead. Now as I consider you as my other self, do me the favour to attend her."

Eugenio clasped the hand of his much-revered friend and hastened to obey him.

Scarce had he announced to the portress that he came from Father Genaro, in obedience to the orders of the Abbess, than, instead of introducing him to the hall, according to the usual custom, he was desired to enter into the interior of the monastery. A Nun conducted him to a secret cabinet, where the Abbess soon made her appearance.

"The reputation of Father Carlo," said she, addressing him, "his virtues, his strict piety, are so perfectly known to us, that I rejoice at Father Genaro's having chosen so worthy a substitute. But, my father," added the Abbess, with an emotion which forcibly struck Eugenio, "the business which he has entrusted to you is of such importance, that I ought to require, on your part, a sacred oath never to reveal it."

"My respect for your orders will doubtless be sufficient, Madam," answered Eugenio: "but notwithstanding that, I am ready to receive your secret under the sacred seal of a confession."

"I demand no more," exclaimed the Abbess; "it is therefore under the sacred seal of confession I entrust to you what you will now witness."—She then gently clap-

ped her hands, and a Nun appeared. "My sister, said she, conduct Father Carlo to the strayed sheep, whom you say so earnestly solicits the last consolations of the Church; for God forbid I should be answerable for the soul of that sinner!"

The Nun bowed her head in silence, lighted a taper, placed it in a dark lantern, and led the way by a secret staircase, which communicated with the cabinet of the Abbess. Eugenio followed her, and traversed several narrow galleries. At length they arrived at an iron grate. The Nun opened it. A large stone staircase, leading to a subterraneous vault, presented itself to the astonished eyes of Eugenio.—"Where are you leading me, Madam?" said he, with emotion. "Are the infirmaries of your Convent under ground?"

The Nun turned towards him without making answer, profound sadness was imprinted on her countenance, and tears dropped from her eyes.

Eugenio then began to comprehend what was required of him. His soul shuddered, and he repented at having undertaken a mission, the accomplishment of which was likely to cause him so much uneasiness; but afterwards the idea of perhaps being of service to the unfortunate creature to whom he was approaching, restored him to his courage.

After having traversed the subterraneous gallery, the Nun stopped before an iron door with double-bars, which she opened with a trembling hand and introduced Eugenio to a capacious chamber hewn out in the rock. A lamp, suspended from the roof, cast that pale and uncertain light around, which it is necessary to be for some time accustomed to, in order to distinguish the objects reflected upon. In one corner was a kind of couch, the furniture of which appeared to have been of green stuff. A large ivory crucifix, placed on a black velvet ground, in an old worm-eaten wooden frame, appeared on the wall to the left. On the right was a matted chair, and near it was a stool, on which were placed some religious books, a chaplet, and an hour-glass.

The Nun softly advanced, and drew aside a kind of curtain which concealed the couch, and offered to the looks of Eugenio the unfortunate object to whom he was anxious to offer the most tender consolations. She was clad in the habit of her order, but without a veil; a prodigious quantity of dark brown hair covered her neck and shoulders,

her forehead and part of her face. Her pale and emaciated hands were joined on her breast; and she would have appeared as already enjoying eternal repose, had not her limbs been agitated by convulsive starts.

"She is asleep," said the Nun, with a low voice. "But gracious Heaven! what kind of a sleep is it?—My Father," added she, with tears in her eyes, "do not awake her. I leave you with her; pray the Almighty God to have pity on her long sufferings! I, who have been the daily witness of her angelic mildness, of her heavenly resignation, already number her among the Saints. But she was desirous, before dying, of receiving the consolations of the Church. I have long solicited this favour from the Lady Abbess, and I am happy she has appointed you to accomplish it.

Eugenio, extremely moved, thanked the Nun, not by words, but by his looks; indeed he was unable to speak. She went out, shut the door, and left him alone with the interesting victim, who still slumbered. He knelt near her, and addressed the most fervent prayers to Heaven. Her sighs, and the faint heavings of her bosom, soon announced to him that she was awake.

"Madam," said Eugenio, in a voice which the excess of his emotion rendered scarce distinct, "you have desired the presence of a Minister of the Lord. I feel happy at having been chosen to fulfil, in your behalf, the sacred duties of my profession. I am ready to hear you, not as your judge, but as your friend, whose soul is sensible to your sorrows, and earnestly desire to alleviate them.

"Where am I?" said the unfortunate Nun. "What voice is that which strikes my ear? The sweet, the dear illusion cannot last! No, it is not him!—it cannot be him!"

"Virginia!" exclaimed Eugenio, with an accent of terror.

"Gracious God!" said Virginia, "you have heard my ardent prayer! I once more behold him! It is my Eugenio, my ever-loved Eugenio, who comes to receive my last sigh!"

Virginia! Virginia!" repeated Eugenio, with an air of destraction. "But now she no longer speaks! She answers me not! Alas! she is dead!" he exclaimed, raising up his unfortunate mistress, who, pale, cold and unmovable, no longer answered his carresses.

He held the lamp near her, and moved aside the flowing hair which covered that adored countenance; where, notwithstanding the ravages of grief and time, the same loveliness and inexpressible charms were visible, the remembrance of which was so deeply engraven on his heart. Eugenio contemplated her for some minutes in a state of calm despair; then yielding to the impetuosity of his grief, he pressed to his bosom the precious remains of her he had so dearly loved—"Virginia! Virginia!" he exclaimed, "answer me!" at the same time kissing the lips of the ill-fated maid, and appearing as though he was endeavouring to re-animate the spark of life by the warm breath which exhaled from his bosom.

Virginia opened her eyes, made an unavailing effort to throw her arms round Eugenio, fixed a tender and mournful look on him, uttered several inarticulate words, reclined her head, and heaved a deep sigh; it was the last the unfortunate Eugenio ever heard from his beloved Virginia!

The Nun waited more than an hour in the subterraneous abode; then venturing to open the door, she shrieked aloud, and entered the dungeon with precipitation.

Eugenio had swooned, and clasped in his arms the dead body of Virginia. His excessive paleness made her at first imagine he was expiring; but the faint palpitation of his breast gave her some hopes. Previous to her administering any assistance, she endeavoured to remove Virginia. After exerting her utmost strength, she effected her purpose, and laid her on the bed. She afterwards took a jug of water, and sprinkled a few drops in Eugenio's face, which soon restored him to himself.

He looked wildly around him, as if he was endeavouring to retrace the remembrance of some frightful dream. When he perceived the Nun near him, he started with an emotion of terror.

"Her sufferings have ceased," said the Nun, with a mournful and resigned air. "She now enjoys eternal happiness. You, on whom her death has produced so terrible an effect, submit to the will of Heaven; for I am persuaded such an excess of grief could rend the heart of no other person but Eugenio. I am convinced it is to him, and not to Father Carlo, I now address myself. He shall receive from me those details, of which he must be anxious

to be informed. Virginia has entrusted all his sorrows to my breast; but let me earnestly entreat him to calm his agitation, and not to lose sight of the dignity that belongs to the sacred character with which he is invested."

Thus saying, she seized the cold and trembling hand of Eugenio, drew him gently from the mournful scene, and shut the door.

"Oh my Virginia!" exclaimed the unfortunate Eugenio, in accents that pierced the heart of the compassionate Nun; then disengaging his hand which she held, he rushed back, and endeavoured to enter the subterraneous chamber.

The Nun left him to exhaust his strength in attempting to open the door; she had the keys, which Eugenio in his frenzy, had not thought of demanding. He addressed himself to Virginia, as if he thought she was capable of hearing him. He entreated her with cries and lamentations to answer him; then falling on his knees, he invoked Heaven, and called down on the heads of the executioners of his mistress, the avenging thunder of the Eternal.—"Yes, vengeance! vengeance!" he suddenly exclaimed, with a degree of fury that froze the Nun with terror.

He was no longer the virtuous Father Carlo, whose calm deportment and commanding gravity inspired respect and confidence; it was the young Eugenio, impelled by all the ardour and impetuosity of his character. He walked with hasty strides; his furious gestures were terrible to behold, and he incessantly repeated—"Vengeance! vengeance!"

"In the name of Heaven!" said the terrified Nun—"in the name of Virginia!" added she, shedding tears, "calm yourself. Ah! if that pure soul, that model of the mildest virtues, could now join her voice to mine, with what earnestness would she not entreat you to offer to God the sacrifice of your revenge?"

"No, no!" exclaimed Eugenio, with dreadful accents, "no pardon, no mercy in this world towards the wretches who have been guilty of such crimes! I shall fly to Rome, and denounce to the Pope this unparalleled scene of horror and tissue of enormities. Tremble at the punishment that awaits you!—But, no," added he, in a milder tone, "it is not you who are guilty; you wept while you was conducting me to HER; you still weep at the sufferings of the lovely victim. Pardon me!—Repeat to me that she was dear to you!—that your compassionate cares and tender

consolations have assuaged the cruel and unheard of miseries by which the barbarians have shortened her days! Oh my Virginia! eternal object of the dearest and most ardent affections of my life, was this the sad destiny to which you was doomed?"

Eugenio clasped his hands, raised his eyes towards Heaven, and a torrent of tears flooded his pale and livid cheeks.

The Nun seized the advantage of the moment to draw him from the subterraneous abode; but before she left it, she took from beneath a large stone a bundle of papers, which she delivered to him.—"It is long," said she, "since I have prayed to Heaven for the opportunity of presenting them to you. Had it occurred sooner, the reading of these papers might have afforded you the means of saving the unfortunate victim, whose loss you now deplore. You will at least peruse details dear to your soul, since they concern Virginia.

Eugenio received the papers in silence, nor did he pronounce a single syllable till he arrived at the door of the cloister. He then pressed the hand of his affectionate conductress, uttered a few words in a low tone of voice, which she did not comprehend, and left her with precipitation.

Father Genaro, astonished at his long absence, expected his arrival with the utmost anxiety; but when he saw him appear, and remarked in his countenance that agitation, that same gloomy expression of despair which, ten years before, he had had such difficulty in combating, he yielded to an involuntary exclamation of terror.

"She is dead!" said Eugenio, throwing himself into a chair.

"How?—What mean you?—Gracious Heaven! explain yourself!" exclaimed Father Genaro.

"She is dead!" repeated Eugenio. "I have seen her, I have received her last sigh! Her clay cold body reposed upon my breast! I would have followed her, but was prevented, and you see me again returned."

"My friend! my dear friend! for pity's sake, explain this inconceivable mystery!" said Father Genaro. "I understand you not. It is impossible for me to comprehend you."

"They have immured her in a subterraneous dungeon," continued Eugenio, with a low voice, "and then they have assassinated her!"

"Just Heaven! who have they assassinated?" exclaimed Father Genaro, in accents of horror.

"Virginia! Virginia!" said Eugenio, while rage darted from his eyes. "Virginia! But she shall be revenged —dreadfully revenged!"

Father Genaro began to suspect a part of the truth; but he in vain endeavoured to assuage the despair of Eugenio, which vented itself in curses and imprecations on the barbarous Abbess of San Cipriano. He threatened to make her expiate her crime by the severity of her punishment. It was only by flattering his scheme of vengeance, and by giving his word to solicit, of the Father Prior, leave of absence to depart the next day for Rome, that the good Genaro was enabled not to calm his spirits, but to restore him to that state of tranquility which rendered him capable of receiving the consolation and assistance, of which he stood so much in need.

Eugenio was highly esteemed by the Father Prior, who besides could refuse no favour to the beloved nephew of the Cardinal Caprara. He was ignorant of the real motive of a journey, the secret of which was buried in the breast of Father Genaro, and that of his unhappy friend.

At five in the morning Eugenio mounted his horse, and repaired to the neighbouring village, where he took a post-chaise for Rome, accompanied by a confidential servant, whom Father Genaro had ordered to attend him. Oppressed with grief, which no language can express, he remained for some time wholly insensible of his existence. He was in that state of moral lethargy, in which the soul, weighed down by anguish, is incapable of experiencing any distinct sensation. His griefs presented themselves in crowds to his imagination, overwhelmed him with their number, and bereft him of the will or power to attach himself to any one in particular.

A cold sweat bedewed the forehead of the unfortunate Eugenio; he took out his handkerchief to wipe it off, when the packet of papers the Nun had delivered to him, and the remembrance of which had wholly escaped him, fell from his pocket to the bottom of the chaise.

Words cannot express the revolution which this circumstance effected on his mind. He took up the packet, contemplated it with anxious looks, and proceeded to break the seal; then, impelled by a sudden emotion of terror, he threw it from him, turned his head aside, and closed his

eyes. Nature dreaded the shock of new griefs. This first emotion which was the result of the dictates of Nature; but soon a motive, more imperious, urged him to take up the packet. He opened it with a trembling hand, hastily ran his eyes over several pages, stopped involuntarily at the name of Virginia, and his burning tears moistened the passage on which without the possibility of withdrawing it, his attention was rivetted.

FRAGMENT.

Written by Sister Marcello Salviati, a Nun of the Abbey of Cipriano.

"If ever this writing falls into the hands of a compassionate being—if Heaven shall grant the most ardent of my wishes, and conduct him to the unfortunate victim on whose behalf I am continually imploring the assistance of a Minister of his worship—ah! how much more than ever shall I felicitate myself at having been made choice of to watch over my interesting companion, and to convey to her her daily food bathed with my tears!

"All-powerful God! pardon thy humble creature; faithful to the vow of obedience I have pronounced at the foot of the altar, I will never betray the confidence of her whom I am bound to consider on earthas the organ of thy holy will. But if my prayers can move her—if she consents that Virginia shall secretly enjoy the consolations of the Church, why may I not hope to obtain, through the medium of thy sacred ministry, the revocation of a decree, which dooms the sad victim, who is the object of my tender solicitude, to the abode of death, ere the term of her mortal career is finished.

"Virginia Spanozzi, mild, modest, and prepossessing, gained the affection of every heart from the first moment of her entering our Convent. A profound sadness, and a degree of depression, which were spread over her countenance, induced a general belief that a violent grief was slowly undermining her health; but the fervour with which she fulfilled all her duties, her patience and resignation in submitting to the severities prescribed by our Order, soon rendered her an object of veneration to the whole Convent.

"Our first Abbess, the worthy Signora Vizzani, loved her as her own daughter. She who succeeded her, far

from being animated by that predilection in her favour, which she so well merited, on the contrary took every opportunity of giving proofs of her marked aversion towards her. Virginia, severely afflicted at the departure of her respectable friend, remained for some time after in a weak and languishing state. On the day of the feast, in honour of the Patrons of our Order, she was appointed to sing a motet. She was taken ill in the Church while performing it. The next day I perceived no alteration in her features, but I learned she had fainted several times in the course of the night. The Abbess and two of our Ancients remained with her till five in the morning, and then returned without allowing any one to enter her cell. At seven o'clock we were informed she was dead; and one of our companions, who had been for many years in a declining state, having died the preceding evening, it was determined they should both be buried at the same time.

"I deplored the loss of Virginia; almost all the Sisters mingled their tears with mine. The Abbess appeared extremely irritated at our grief; for which reason, most of my companions soon resumed the appearance of their usual serenity and tranquillity.

"The evening after the funeral I was at Chapel, where I long prayed for the repose of the soul of Virginia. A desire to sleep, which it was impossible for me to overcome weighed down my eyelids, and when I awoke, the Convent Bell was striking twelve. Terrified at finding myself out of my cell at such an hour, I proceeded with trembling steps by the way of the dining-hall, and passed along several winding cloisters, apprehensive lest, if I went the usual way, I should be overheard. At the corner, of a gallery leading to the apartment of the Abbess, I heard a hollow kind of noise, and soon after perceived a light. Overcome with fear, I stopped, without the power of advancing, when I soon distinctly perceived the Abbess holding a lamp, and followed by four of our Ancients, who appeared to be carrying a very heavy burthen. I was ready to expire with terror when I perceived them advancing directly towards the place where I was, and found it impossible to conceal myself from their observation. Scarce had I time to form a reflection relative to the embarrassed situation in which I was placed, than the Abbess rudely seized me by the arm.

"What are you doing here?" she exclaimed, in a terrific tone of voice.

I fell at her feet, and would have attempted to justify myself, but the words expired on my lips.

'What are you doing here?' she repeated, in accents very little calculated to divest me of the terror with which I was seized.

'Madam,' said one of the Ancients, 'she has seen too much to allow us to make a mystery of the rest. I think we ought to conduct her to the subterraneous chamber, and there hear what she has to say in excuse for her criminal conduct. The example she will have continually before her eyes, will, I hope, make her sensible that the sacred statutes of our Order are not to be violated with impunity."

"The Abbess regarded me with a look that made me shudder, and ordered me to follow her.

"I obeyed in silence; a few minutes after we arrived at a part of the Convent which was entirely unknown to me. The Abbess opened a grate, and made us descend a staircase that led to a subterraneous vault hewn out in the rock. She stopped before an iron door, by which we entered a chamber, the extent of which I could not at first perceive. She lighted a lamp that was suspended from the roof, whilst the Ancients placed, upon a kind of bed in one corner of the chamber, the load they had brought with them.

'See,' said the Abbess, dragging me towards the bed, 'observe the fate reserved for those who, like this unworthy hypocrite, dare to violate the holy vows they have pronounced at the foot of the altar.'

"On finishing these words, she drew the curtain, and discovered to my astonished sight the beauteous Virginia, whom the whole convent deplored as dead.

"I uttered a piercing shriek, placed my hands before my eyes, and reeled backwards against the wall. One of the Ancients, fearing lest I should swoon, made me swallow a few drops of a cordial, which soon recovered my spirits.

"Called upon to give an account of my conduct, I told them frankly, and without asking pardon for a fault in which my will was no way concerned. The Abbess and the Ancients retired to a farther part of the chamber, and after having consulted together for about a quarter of an hour, they ordered me to advance.

'I am willing to believe,' said the Abbess, 'that it was without any bad intention you was in the cloisters in the

middle of the night. I have, besides, certain means of knowing whether you impose upon me; and if I discover you have, the punishment that awaits you will be terrible. But listen to what I now require of you. It is to your care I confide the unhappy wretch, who will soon recover from the lethargy into which she is plunged. You shall convey to her every day the food necessary to her existence. If you ever utter a word—if you suffer the most distant hint respecting her to escape you in the Monastery you are undone. Remember, my Sister, your vow of obedience,' added the Abbess, in a tone of severity; 'I order you to bury in your bosom the important secret with which you are entrusted; and it is on pain of eternal damnation I declare you responsible for the least word you utter upon the subject, without my express permission.'

"I bowed in silence. The Ancients required an oath on my part. They dictated the form of it, and I found myself forced to repeat it. We afterwards left the subterraneous chamber. The Abbess carefully shut the door, delivered me the keys, and conducted me to my cell, where she left me, abandoned to the sad reflections to which the dreadful scene I had witnessed gave birth.

"I could not divest myself of the idea of Virginia; she was present to my imagination as she lay pale and immoveable in the gloomy cavern. I contemplated the horror she must feel when she awoke, and my heart was oppressed with grief. I would willingly have returned to her, to have received her first look, and offered her my tender consolations; but I was not allowed to see her again till the next evening, after the Nuns had retired to their cells.

"That day appeared to me insupportably long; I however endeavoured to repress my sorrow and my impatience. The Abbess watched all my motions, and the Ancients never lost sight of me. At length the wished-for moment arrived. Faithful to the instructions I had received, I repaired, by several turnings and windings, to the subterraneous vault. I secretly conveyed into the basket, containing the bread and jug of water destined to the support of Virginia, some refreshments I had saved from what was allowed me. I entered the fatal chamber with so lively an emotion, that I could not at first distinguish a single object around me.

"Virginia was seated by the bedside; she did not move when I entered, nor did she even raise her eyes from the ground.

'Sister,' said I, with a voice interrupted by my sighs, 'my dear Sister, take courage; Heaven has sent you a friend.'

"Virginia heaved a deep sigh.—'A friend!' said she, in a low tone of voice, 'a friend!' She again looked stedfastly on the earth, and was silent.

"I advanced towards her, and seated myself on the bed close to her. I held one of her hands within mine, and said every thing the most tender affection and friendship could inspire.

"Virginia listened a long while without returning me any answer; but one of my tears which dropped on her hand, made her start.

'You weep,' said she. Ah! you have reason to weep. What must he suffer!—he believes me dead! Dead!' she repeated, raising her eyes towards Heaven. 'Oh my dear Eugenio!'

"An excessive paleness overspread her lovely features; she remained motionless. I instantly took from the basket a cordial, and made her take a few drops; but it was with infinite difficulty I restored her to life.

"She contemplated me with that enchanting sweetness which engaged every heart to her interest.—'What kindness, dear Marcella;' said she. 'Is it possible that my judges can have entrusted their barbarous vengeance to you? You appear in every respect but ill adapted for such a task.'

'It is Providence who has permitted it,' I exclaimed. 'I prayed for the repose of your soul at the foot of the altar. My prayers have been heard, and I am allowed to afford you, in this world at least, all the consolations which depend upon myself.'

"I then related to her my adventure on the preceding night; and repeated the discourse of the Abbess, as well as the orders I had received to guard the prisoner confided to my care.

"Virginia listened to me, while her eyes were bathed in tears; but certain exclamations, which escaped her during my recital, gave me to understand that the remembrance of him she had already named, alone occupied her thoughts. I remained above an hour with her; I could not leave her. The fear alone of being suspected by the Abbess, who might be watching me, forced me at last to retire. I en-

treated her to partake of the refreshments I had brought her, promised to procure her every comfort in my power, and went out, or rather tore myself from the chamber, repeating that I would return on the following night as early as possible.

"I burnt with impatience to learn the motives that had induced the Lady Abbess to exercise so cruel a vengeance towards her. From several observations I had made in the course of my conversation with Virginia, I suspected she was not altogether innocent of the crime with which she was accused; but I already felt every disposition to consider her fault with that indulgence which was dictated by the most tender friendship.

"The next evening I repaired to the subterraneous abode half an hour earlier than I had done the preceding. I found Virginia risen, and near the door. She threw herself into my arms the moment she perceived me. Her eyes seemed swelled with her tears, and she still continued weeping in my bosom.—'Eugenio!' she repeated, sighing, 'Oh my dear Eugenio.'

"I took her hand, drew her towards the bed, on which I forced her to seat herself by me.

'Let us converse together respecting Eugenio,' said I, with the most tender accents I could assume. 'Confide your sorrows to my breast. Ah! believe me, if it depended no me to relieve them, I would sacrifice my existence to serve you.'

"Virginia again embraced me. I pressed her to my heart, and mingled my tears with her's. I afterwards insensibly led her, by a variety of questions, dictated by the most unfeigned and tender affection towards her, to repose an entire confidence in me.

[*Here Sister Marcella entered into a variety of details, with which the reader is already acquainted. We shall resume her recital at that part where Virginia separated from Eugenio in the cypress grove.*]

"On her return to the Convent, Virginia thought she heard a noise behind her. Fear suspended her motion. She listened with attention, but every thing became calm and silent. She reached her cell without meeting with any circumstance by the way that could induce her to believe she had been observed by any one.

" A burning fever prevented her closing her eyes the rest of the night. Unaccountable apprehensions and sad presentiments at first produced a suffusion of tears; but the certainty of having found Eugenio unaltered in his affection towards her, the hope of seeing him again, and perhaps of being united to him, if the Pope would dispense with her vows, gave rise to such flattering and consolatory reflections, that she forgot her past misfortunes, and thought only of the future prospect which presented itself to her imagination, decorated with assurances of permanent bliss, love, and happiness.

" The day appeared, and she was still occupied with the thoughts of Eugenio, recalling to her recollection all he had said, repeating the many tender vows he had offered to her, and imagining she heard the loved companion of her infancy, the cherished lover of her riper years, exclaim with a tremulous voice—' *To-morrow, my beauteous Virginia! remember to-morrow!*"

" That day, the longest Virginia had ever experienced, at length elapsed. Unable to suppress the trouble and anxiety which agitated her, she repaired to the cypress grove long before the hour Eugenio had appointed to be beneath the walls of the Convent. She walked with delight over the spot she had trod the preceding evening with him, stopped at every place where he had stopped, and afterwards sunk into a profound reverie, in which she remained till she heard the voice of Francesco, who softly called to her.

' Madam,' said he, ' it is eleven o'clock; let us profit by the present moment, when the heavens are darkened by clouds, to reach the outside of the Abbey. If Signor Eugenio is not yet arrived, we may wait for him with more security in this grove.'

" Virginia returned no answer, but followed Francesco, who walked before her. They had already got beyond the cypress grove, and were within a few steps of the door, when several voices were heard behind them. Francesco cried aloud, and took flight, leaving Virginia overwhelmed with terror, and fainting, in the arms of three Ancient Nuns who had seized hold of her.

' Where are you going?' said one of them, in dreadful accents. ' Wretch, Tremble!—Your guilty projects are fully known to us, and dearly shall you pay for the dishonour you have endeavoured to bring upon our Convent by flying from it in company with a man.'

"Virginia, stupified with terror and amazement, returned no answer, but suffered herself to be conducted, or rather dragged, to the interior of the Convent by two of the Ancients, while the third in vain pursued the traces of Francesco; and unable to find him, shut the door, which was left open, and then joined her companions to load the unfortunate Virginia with bitter and cruel reproaches.

"They led her to her cell, where the Abbess was waiting for them. 'Hear your doom!' said that implacable woman. 'To-morrow you shall no longer be reckoned among the living. Inclosed for the remainder of your days in the subterraneous dungeons of the Monastery, you will have time to implore the Divine Mercy for the crime you have committed.'

"Virginia could hear no more; a mortal coldness glided through her veins, her knees sunk under her, and she fell senseless at the feet of the Abbess.

"When she returned to her recollection, she found herself on her bed. The Abbess and several Nuns surrounded her; their severe countenances and threatening looks made her tremble; she closed her eyes.

'Swallow this drink!' said the Abbess, with a low voice.

"Virginia raised her head, clasped her hands with a supplicating air, and afterwards pushed away the cup which was presented to her.

'Obey!' added the Ancients.

"The lovely victim heaved a deep sigh, raised her angelic eyes to heaven, and addressed a fervent prayer to her Maker.—'Yes, I will obey,' said she, turning towards her inexorable judges. 'Cruel woman! I pardon you the vengeance you are about to exercise upon me. May the Most High, whom I have this moment implored, not render you responsible for the long and dreadful sufferings to which you have condemned me! May he be more merciful towards you than you are to me, for a fault which, alas! I feel I never can repent!'

"On finishing these words she took the cup, and drank the last drop of its contents. In a few minutes an universal lethargy overspread her limbs, her eyes closed, and she sunk into a deep sleep, from which she did not recover till long after she had been placed in the subterraneous chamber. Looking around her with affright, and contemplating the extent of her gloomy prison—'Behold,' she ex-

claimed, 'my last abode! It is here for ever I am doomed to remain; for ever must I pass my days in this horrid place.'

"An emotion of despair succeeded this terrible reflection; she uttered piercing and lamentable cries.—'Oh my mother! my dear, my tender mother!' she exclaimed, at the same time crossing her arms on her lovely bosom, 'your dreadful prophecy is now accomplished,—your fears are fully justified. *The last misfortune which Fate has in store for me* has now reached me! Alas! who shall now help me in this my extreme misery?'

"The remembrance of Eugenio was an additional pang to her deplorable situation, or rather it made her forget her own sufferings, and absorbed them in the idea of what she was conscious must be his feelings. Though she could have supported the excess of grief produced by her own personal misfortunes, she had not sufficient strength or courage to sustain those of her dear Eugenio; and she sunk into that state of despair from which my presence was unable to divert her the first day I appeared before her in the subterraneous dungeon.'

"My tears flowed abundantly during the sad recital of Virginia. In addition to the interest and compassion with which she had at first inspired me, I experienced that tender attachment, the proofs of which I never ceased to give her till death separated us. Heaven grant me strength to survive her!—Dear and unfortunate Virginia, may you find in another that respect for your misfortunes, that admiration for your virtues, and, above all, that solicitude which compels me to make you the constant object of my cares and most affectionate attentions!

"Every night I passed two hours with her in the subterraneous dungeon; I carried her books to amuse her, tapers to enlighten the dismal solitude of the place, and never failed to add the choicest part of my repasts to the food destined for her support.

"A week had scarce elapsed from the time this melancholy task was imposed on me, when the Abbess received a letter from Signora Vizzani, who, having obtained permission for Virginia to be with her, hastened to demand her young friend. An order from the Archbishop, that accompanied the letter, would have left the Abbess without the least pretence for refusing to allow her departure, if she had not taken care to secure her victim in such a man-

ner, that no power on earth could wrest her from her. I concealed this circumstance from Virginia, as it doubtless would have aggravated her grief; and when she interrogated me a few days afterwards relative to the worthy Signora Vizzani, of whom she preserved a tender recollection, I replied that I knew not whether the Abbess had received any tidings from her.

" Time having rendered me less apprehensive of being watched during my visits to my interesting prisoner, I suffered her to enjoy all the liberty which it was in my power to grant her. I no longer shut the door of her chamber, but let her walk in the subterraneous gallery. I only secured the key of the grate at the extremity of the staircase, and frequently, when I visited her, we traversed the spacious vault together, discoursing of Eugenio. Virginia wept, I mingled my tears with her's, and always quitted her in a state of more apparent tranquility, till the next day presented her to my sight the victim of the same griefs and sorrows.

' Ah! if I knew he had ceased to live,' said she one day, sighing, ' I would resign myself to my fate; I should even experience a delight in this dreadful solitude, where the exemption from the prescribed duties of the Convent would leave me at liberty to occupy my thoughts on him alone; but the idea that he suffers, that he will suffer for the remainder of his life—for, alas! Marcella, I know that the remembrance of Virginia will never be effaced from his bosom—is a torment from which all my resignation cannot relieve me.'

" I embraced Virginia, and encouraged a belief in her mind that Eugenio was no more!—' If you only reflect,' said I, ' upon the ardent passions he has received from Nature, and that profound sensibility which you say characterizes him, and absorbs his existence in your's, how can you suppose that he has been able to survive the overwhelming despair he must experience at having lost you?'

' Oh my God!' exclaimed Virginia; ' gracious Heaven, Eugenio dead!—the victim of grief! No, no,' added she, concealing her face in my bosom; ' no, Marcella, he lives —tell me that he lives! that, more happy than myself, Heaven has granted him strength to submit to his sad destiny; but do not lead me to imagine I breathe in a world where Eugenio no longer remains!'

Interrupted sighs, and expressions of sorrow, succeeded this sudden and unusually violent emotion of her grief.

Fearing lest we should be overheard, I drew her towards her chamber, and had extreme difficulty in calming her mind: I at length succeeded, but it was almost day-light before I quitted her.

" When I returned to my cell, I seriously reflected upon the means I might adopt, in order to procure some information relative to the fate of Eugenio. I thought that by relieving Virginia from that cruel state of uncertainty in which her ideas incessantly floated, I should more easily restore her mind to a state of tranquility. We may struggle against grief—we may weaken or subdue it; but Uncertainty, that fever of the soul, that Hydra, the threatening aspect of which hope only conceals for a time, in order to render it afterwards still more terrible, has ever appeared to me the most insupportable of all tortures; and I would have tempted every danger to have relieved Virginia from its impression. After having successively adopted and rejected every means that occurred to my imagination, I was forced to confess to myself that the task I wished to undertake was impracticable. I could not stir a step without being closely watched; there was not the least of my actions but what the Abbess was accurately informed of in all its details; and I was but too well assured, if I attempted to send a letter to any one, it would be opened and read before it was suffered to be taken from the Convent. I was interdicted from appearing in the hall, or mingling with the rest of the Nuns. A still stronger motive than all these I have mentioned, determined me to forego the plan I had conceived; it was, that if I rendered myself suspected by a degree of zeal, the ultimate success of which could not but be doubtful, the Abbess would no longer entrust me with the care and superintendence of Virginia. This idea alone made me shudder.—' No!' I exclaimed, ' dear and unfortunate friend, no, I will not run the risk of depriving you of the only consolation which Heaven permits you to enjoy.'

" The next day Virginia did not meet me as usual at the foot of the staircase of the subterraneous vault. Anxious with regard to her health, and apprehensive that she might be in want of assistance, I hastened to her gloomy chamber; but words cannot expess the surprise and terror with which I was seized, when I perceived she was not there.—' Virginia,' I exclaimed in a state bordering on distraction, ' Virginia! ungrateful Virginia! is it thus you have repaid my confidence?—Gracious Heaven what has become of her?'

I added, sympathizing in her destiny.—Suddenly a dreadful idea petrified me with fear. "If the Abbess, informed of the alleviations I have procured to my unfortunate prisoner, has conveyed her away in order to plunge her in some other dungeon!' I could not support so horrid a supposition, and rushing towards the subterraneous gallery, I traversed every part of it. I already felt my limbs sink under me, and was bedewed with a cold sweat, when I perceived Virginia; she appeared to come from one of the angles that terminated the gallery.

'Marcella,' said she, seizing my hand with a degree of ardour that surprised me, 'dear Marcella, I have just beheld the light of Heaven!—Liberty!—yes, I believe that liberty, dear liberty, is not ravished from me for ever!—'Eugenio! Eugenio!' added she, with transport; then leading me with more than ordinary emotion to her chamber, she informed me, as distinctly as the agitation of her feelings would allow her, that after she had been walking for several hours in the subterraneous gallery, the fatigue produced by the exercise induced her to sit herself down by the wall which terminated the vault. While she leant against one of the angles, she felt that the stones yielded to her weight; surprised at this phœnomenon, she rose, and endeavoured to shake a huge mass, which, soon giving way left a wide aperture, through which the cold air suddenly rushed upon her. Plunged in the most profound obscurity she was unable to distinguish the extent of the vacuity she had affected, and returned to her chamber, from whence she brought two tapers, in order to examine it with more attention. She soon distinguished a narrow and oblique passage, the extent of which she was, however, unable to explore. She ventured over the ruins, and found herself in the entrance of the passage; she perceived that the cold air, which still blew towards her, proceeded through a crevice of the rock adjoining the wall. One of her tapers was extinguished; she immediately lighted it again, but the reflection of both was so feeble, that she almost dreaded to advance farther: however the hope of finding an issue towards the country restored her courage. She continued her way, and observed, with surprise and pleasure, that the passage widened as she proceeded. A few minutes after, a hollow noise struck her astonished ears; she stopped to listen, and distinctly heard the murmur of a cascade. Recollecting that she had observed several in the neighbourhood of the Convent, she doubted not that the path she was exploring would conduct her to the rocks; and her heart beat with

violence at the flattering idea. She already thought she had reached the extremity of the passage, when a sudden gust of wind extinguished both her tapers, and she was plunged in darkness, save the faint glimmering light that proceeeded through the opening. Her terror then became extreme, and she remained for some time immoveable, neither daring to advance or to return; she determined upon the latter step as the least dangerous of the two, and she had with difficulty regained the gallery at the moment when I was tortured with such cruel anxieties for her safety.

'Ah, Marcella! good and compassionate Marcella!' added she, with a vivacity which imparted to her charming figure an expression I had never before remarked, 'let us return together by the way that Providence has perhaps traced out for my deliverance from this dreadful prison. Do you take your lantern, and let us explore an issue from this hated place, and then, then,' said she, pressing my hand to her bosom, 'you may let your grateful prisoner escape!'

"I contemplated her with the most earnest emotion.—'Doubt not,' I exclaimed, embracing her, 'of every assistance I can render you; would to heaven I could realize the promise I have so often made of assauaging your griefs though at the expence of my existence!'

'Heavens!' exclaimed Virginia, 'what dreadful ideas do your words excite! Doubtless the monsters would wreak their utmost vengeance on you, should you on my account put in practice the most sublime precepts of our holy religion. No, Marcella, I will not leave you here, abandoned to their cruel vengeance; you shall accompany my flight; we will both seek an asylum in the monastery of my respectable friend, Signora Vizzani. Say, ah! say that you will go with me!' added she, caressing me.

"It would have been too severe a trial for me to have damped, in the least degree, the only moment of happiness she had experienced since her arrival in this abode of sorrow and despair.—'Let us begin,' said I, smiling, 'by examining the path you have discovered; we will afterwards regulate our conduct by the observations we shall make. Believe me, my dear Virginia, never could I separate myself from you without the most heartfelt regret; but entrust to my prudence the care of directing the hazardous enterprise in which you are about to engage.'

"Virginia, satisfied with this specious answer, embraced me with transport; she desired we should immediately

return to the subterraneous passage, but I suggested that it was near day, and she consented to defer the attempt till the following night.

" When I was alone, and reflected on what had passed, I at first experienced an emotion of terror.—' If I let Virginia escape,' thought I, ' what will become of her? Alone without money, without resource, wandering through the country without the means of subsistence, or a friend to relieve her! It is true, I need be under no apprehensions of her being pursued, for, during the three years I have been appointed to guard her in the subterraneous dungeon, no one but myself has ever entered it.—But the idea of the oath the Abbess had forced me to take, tormented me. It was on peril of *eternal damnation* that I was responsible for Virginia. I had sworn, and I shuddered, in spite of myself, at the idea of perjury. I could not submit my scruples even to the tribunal of penitence, for my Confessor was particularly included among the number of those to whom I was never to communicate the fatal secret. Dreadfully agitated by these reflections, and not knowing what course to take, I fell on my knees, and prayed to Providence to direct me. A voice at that moment secretly whispered to me that I could not be culpable in delivering an unfortunate victim from her sufferings; that voice seemed to me to proceed from Heaven. I determined to obey its dictates, and I returned the next night to Virginia, with the firm intention of restoring her to liberty.

" When I entered her dungeon, she had just finished dressing herself; she had quitted the robe of our Order, and had arrayed herself in white. I recollected having brought her these cloaths long before, at her urgent request. Her hair was concealed beneath a sort of night-cap, and she resembled in her dress one of the women of the adjacent country; but the dazzling beauty of her features, and her noble and elegant manner, sufficiently announced that her modest and lowly apparel was only a disguise. I admired the ingenuity with which she had altered the dress I had brought her, and so peculiarly adapted it to conceal her flight, and I felicitated her upon her happy invention.

' Here is your disguise, Marcella,' said she, presenting me a bundle, from which she drew a dress exactly similar to her own; ' put it on immediately, and let us depart.'

" I had a great deal of difficulty in making her sensible of the danger she ran by my accompanying her in her flight

—'They will not fail,' said I, 'to follow our traces. Depart alone, dear Sister, and I promise to join you at the Convent of Signora Vizzani as soon as I shall be able to do so without any risk.'

She embraced me with tears in her eyes, lavished on me the most affectionate marks of her gratitude, and was only tranquillized by the renewal of my promise to fly from the vengeance that awaited me if it should be discovered. She was no longer in the subterraneous dungeon.

"I had furnished my basket with a double store of provisions; I undertook to carry it, while Virginia walked before me with the lantern. We arrived at the entrance of the subterraneous passage, and I felt the cold air rush through the aperture she had before mentioned to me: its effect was such, I could scarce proceed; but Virginia, to whom the hope of liberty imparted a degree of supernatural activity, took me by the hand, and drew me after her. When we had arrived at the spot where her lights had been extinguished, we had to struggle against the same gust of wind, which whistled by us, and shook the stones around us in a manner sufficient to have dismayed hearts more courageous than our's were. I stopped, and raising the lantern above my head, the better to discover the path before us, perceived that the vault became considerably narrower at its extremity. We continued cautiously advancing; but, alas! when we had reached the spot where Virginia hoped to find an opening towards the country, it was so small as scarcely to admit our arms. Virginia threw herself down, and, crawling on her knees, endeavoured to force her way through:—after an infinite deal of fatigue and trouble, she removed a large stone which the damp had before loosened. I stooped at the same time, and held out the lantern; we each uttered a cry of despair at observing that this issue, the object of our most ardent desires, looked towards an immense reservoir of water formed by several cascades, the murmuring noise of which we distinctly heard.

"The unfortunate Virginia, pale, and abandoned to despair, attempted to rise, but she was unable to support herself. I received her in my arms, and we remained, for several minutes, in this situation, without either of us having the power to utter a word.

'Dear loved friend,' said I at last, 'let us patiently submit to the will of Heaven——'

'Heaven!' interrupted she, with an accent of despair that made me shudder, 'can Heaven ordain the punishment of the innocent? What have I done to be rendered thus wretched and unhappy? What barbarous decree of Providence condemns me thus to linger out my wretched life in this hateful dungeon, secluded from the light of Heaven?—No, no, it is not, it cannot be Heaven—it is Hell that presides over my destiny.'

"I took her by the hand, and led her gently back by the same path we had before trod with very different sensations.

"Virginia preserved silence; her eyes were expressive of the gloomy thoughts that rent her soul, and her limbs trembled under her. When we had arrived near the aperture adjoining the wall, I examined it with attention, and entertained not the smallest doubt of its leading towards the country; but it was extremely narrow, and the wall with which it was connected, strengthened by several iron bolts, seemed not likely to yield to the weak efforts we could make to force a passage on that side.

"I conducted Virginia to her chamber; she still preserved a profound silence, and received my caresses with a degree of unconcern which gave me extreme uneasiness. She was soon seized with an ague. I forced her to bed; but it was not long before I perceived she was attacked by a violent fever. I would have given the world to have remained with her; but day was on the point of breaking, and I was obliged to leave her. A secret impulse urged me several times to return to her dungeon after I had quitted it. I entreated Virginia to make use of an invigorating cordial which I placed by her bedside; and I again bathed her countenance with my tears. The unfortunate victim, at length assured of the grief I experienced, clasped my hand, pressed it to her lips, and regarded me with a degree of expression in which was portrayed all that tender attachment she had ever evinced towards me.

"The next day I flew to her as early as possible;—her fever had diminished, and I found her kneeling before the crucifix, placed against the wall of her chamber.

'Join your prayers to mine, dear Marcella,' said she, 'aid me to obtain the pardon of Heaven for the guilty murmurs I suffered to escape me yesterday.'

"I pressed her to my bosom; we wept together; and I at length succeeded, by my tender and consolatory attentions, in reconciling her to herself.

"From that day Virginia, calm and resigned, appeared like an angel divested of all earthly incumbrance, and ready to take her flight to the bosom of the Divinity. Eugenio was the constant theme of her discourse. Daily she prayed to her God not to relieve her from the griefs and regrets which the remembrance of her unhappy lover perpetually excited, but to grant her courage to bear them with resignation.

"May Heaven hear her prayers! May its mercy put a period to her sad existence!

"The sincere friendship by which I am actuated towards her, would not allow me to murmur at her loss; on the contrary, I should rejoice at the assurance she was in the blessed and happy abode, where I hope to meet her, never more to be separated."

The agony of Eugenio, during this mournful recital, may be easier imagined than described; exclamations of despair frequently escaped him, and when the servant, who followed the chaise on horseback, yielding to the concern he felt at his agitation, approached to his assistance, Eugenio in terrifying accents ordered him to retire. He remained above thirty hours without once alighting from the coach, or taking the slightest nourishment to support his spirits during the interview he was to have with the Cardinal.

When he arrived at Rome, and the postchaise entered the court-yard of the Palace of Caprara, the numerous servants who surrounded it were unable to recognize the once gay and elegant Eugenio, who, in a monastic habit, with pallid cheeks and hollow eyes, advanced with unsteady steps towards the portico of the Palace. The white robe in which he was wrapped, his extreme emaciation, and his gloomy and serious air, imparted to his whole figure the appearance of a spectre.

"Tell his Eminence that I desire to speak with him alone," said he to a servant who waited near him. The servant bowed respectfully, and after having introduced him to the audience-chamber of the Cardinal, he left him to execute the orders he had received.

The moment the Cardinal appeared Eugenio knelt be-

fore him.—" I demand justice of your Eminence," said he with a firm tone, at the same time presenting the papers Marcella had delivered to him.

The Cardinal at first did not know his nephew;—he stretched forth his hand to receive the papers, when the unfortunate Eugenio, yielding to the train of mournful reflections which the presence of his uncle excited, uttered a loud cry, closed his eyes, and appeared entirely bereft of the use of his senses.

" Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed the astonished Cardinal, " it is him!—Yes, it is my nephew—my dear Eugenio!"

" Yes," said Eugenio, re-animated by the caresses of his uncle, " yes, it is me, it is your nephew:—But, justice! justice!—Vengeance!" added he, with a terrible accent.

The Cardinal, alarmed, was at a loss to conceive what could have reduced him to so violent a state of agitation;—he took him by the hand, forced him to be seated by him, and with much difficulty obtained the explanation he desired.

While Eugenio was speaking, the countenance of the Cardinal expressed the utmost indignation.—" What a scene of horror!" he exclaimed, when he had finished;—" Oh my God! is it possible that thy holy religion should be thus profaned?—that those who ought to afford an example of virtue and forbearance, should become the executioners of their fellow-creatures!—Yes, I will punish this crime," added he with indignation; " I will instantly speak to the Pope; and may the chastisement inflicted on the unworthy Abbess of San Cipriano, be a dreadful example to those who abuse the power entrusted to them!"

Eugenio kissed the hand of his uncle in a transport of joy, and appeared to experience a degree of tranquillity, to which he had long been a stranger, the moment he received an assurance that the innocent Virginia would be revenged.

The next day the Cardinal delivered him the Pope's brief; by which it was ordered that Signora Menzzoni should be degraded from the rank of Abbess, and escorted

by guards to the most recluse Convent belonging to the States of the Church; further, that she should be condemned to the simple functions of attendant sister, as well as the four Ancients, the accomplices of her vengeance; that the whole wing of the Abbey of San Cipriano, in which were the subterraneous vaults, should be entirely demolished; that the ruins should remain on the spot, as a monument of the justice of his holiness; and, lastly, that the mild and compassionate Marcella Salviati should be appointed Abbess of San Cipriano, and should immediately supersede Signora Menzzoni.

Eugenio, furnished with this brief, quitted Rome without a moment's delay. His impatience to punish the executioners of Virginia was at first the only sensation he experienced; but afterwards, the certainty of being able to recompense the tender cares of Marcella, afforded a soothing balm to the bleeding wound in his heart, and he was still occupied with the pleasing reflection when he arrived at San Cipriano.

Anxious in the first instance of sinking the Abbess under the weight of her terror, he desired her to be informed that he waited, in order to signify to her the orders of the Pope. That wicked woman, calling to her mind the unworthy treatment of Virginia, trembled with apprehension and terror; and when she appeared at the grate, she was scarce able to support herself.

Eugenio, turning from her with horror, presented her with the brief.——"Monster!" said he, in a terrific tone of voice, "read your condemnation, and obey!"

The Abbess hastily perused the paper, uttered a loud scream, and remained fixed to the spot; then, falling on her knees, she implored with tears the compassion of Eugenio.

"No pardon!" he exclaimed,—"obey!——Were you actuated by the least emotion when the innocent victim you have so barbarously sacrificed, was imploring your pity?—No pardon!" he repeated with fury, observing that she still continued at his feet; then, precipitately rushing out of the room, he ordered the guards who attended in the court-yard, to seize that remorseless woman, as well as her wicked accomplices, and conduct them to the monastery appointed by the Pope.

The whole Convent learned with joy that it was Marcella who was to become their Lady Abbess; and they beheld the departure of Signora Menzzoni without a regret for her fate, which she had so well merited.

The indefatigable Eugenio on the same day ordered the demolition of the wing of the Abbey situated over the subterraneous dungeons, and allowed the workmen not a moment's relaxation till every trace of it was destroyed. He afterwards erected a modest tomb over the spot where Virginia was buried. Every day he passed several hours in contemplating it; he never left it without his eyes being suffused with tears; and when he had retired to his retreat, he invoked the shade of his Virginia, his dear Virginia.

The friendship of Father Genaro, his attentions, his mild indulgence, and particularly the consolations which religion afforded, assisted by time, assuaged the grief of Eugenio, or rather confined its transports to his own breast.

To a superficial and imperfect observer, his resignation appeared characteristic of the Sage; but to a man of sufficient penetration to explore the recesses of the human mind, it was the calmness and insensibility of a wounded spirit bowed down by the most heart-rending sensations. Father Genaro alone was not deceived—he had discovered the real secret of Nature.

CONCLUSION.

THE two French travellers could not read the melancholy history of Eugenio and Virginia without emotion;—at various passages they had shed the tears of pity over those unfortunate lovers, but Eugenio particularly excited their most ardent compassion. He had experienced the misery of surviving the lovely object of his affection. Each successive day was a renewal of his sorrows—every hour, every minute left in his soul the traces of their slow and tardy course, by bringing with them the fatal remembrance of his unparalleled sufferings. The travellers recollected the expression of profound melancholy

which distinguished his whole figure and deportment, and they felt an augmentation of that interest he had at first inspired.

When they returned to France, the urgency of their private affairs forced them to separate; but whenever they met, they discoursed concerning Eugenio, shed tears of compassion over his sad destiny, and read together different passages of his manuscript.

Two years after one of the travellers was in the garden of the Thuilleries, when he met his companion walking with a pensive air on the Terrace des Feuillans.

"I am extremely happy to see you here," said the latter; "I was intending to call at your house, to inform you that in eight days I shall return to Italy."

"I will accompany you," answered the other with eagerness; "I confess to you that, on this occasion, the pursuit of natural history will not be the object of my journey. The desire of knowing what has become of Father Carlo, or rather of the interesting Eugenio, induces me to undertake it."

"It is precisely for the same reason," said his companion, "that I have determined to depart. I can no longer resist the desire I have to see that unfortunate man, and to contemplate in his company the environs of the Abbey of San Cipriano."

"We are both then resolved upon the journey," repeated the two friends. They separated after having fixed a day for their departure.

They directly repaired to Urbino. It was their intention to proceed on foot by the same road Eugenio had formerly passed, in order to arrive beneath the walls of the Convent of Cipriano on the night, when he hoped to fly with Virginia from the Convent.

It was about an hour after sunset;—twilight had already concealed under its vague and fleeting shades and the rich luxuriant country which had extended itself to the sight of our travellers, when they arrived at the door at the foot of the rocks, where Eugenio had passed such afflicting moments. They stopped to regard it in silence, impressed with that melancholy respect ever inspired by the contemplation of objects which recal the remembrance of an unfortunate friend. It was there Eugenio had experienced

such dreadful sufferings—it was there Virginia had for ever abandoned herself to despair!—Plunged in reveries that did honour to their feelings, the two travellers were unable to quit the sad scene. To the murmur of the wind which agitated the foliage of the cypress-trees that surrounded them, their attentive imagination joined the soul-rending sighs of Eugenio.

They remained rivetted to the spot above an hour, and were only induced to quit it by the desire of again meeting the man whose calamities had so highly interested their feelings;—this consideration alone urged them to leave the walls of the Convent of San Cipriano.

Directed by the pale light of the moon, which had just risen, the two travellers took the road that led to the Monastery of Celestins, the lofty turrets of which they perceived through the trees. They proceeded along various paths which, at every turning, presented new and enchanting objects of rural beauty; they stopped to admire them, to breathe the balsamic air which the soft and gentle zephyrs wafted to them, and enjoy that august and awful silence of the night, which wraps the soul in calm tranquillity, and seems to invite it to partake in the repose of Nature.

Deeply affected at the scene, they communicated their mutual sensations to each other, when suddenly their ears were assailed with the mournful chants of a funeral procession, which were repeated by the surrounding echoes. The two friends, surprised at what they heard, redoubled their steps in order to get out of the valley into which they had descended. They had already attained an elevated spot, from which they could discover the adjacent plains; but the funeral chants had ceased, and the silence that succeeded them was only interrupted by the mournful toll of the Abbey bell. They soon descried a prodigious number of lights through a part of the foliage.

"It is a procession," said one of the travellers.

"No," replied the other, "they never perform those religious rites at so late an hour."

Scarce had they reached the avenue of poplars leading to the Monastery of Celestins, than they distinguished a long train of Monks bearing lighted tapers: they proceeded with slow and solemn steps, and sang their funeral hymns. Their robes of dazzling white—the regularity of the pro-

cession—the monotonous sound of the Abbey bell, which the direction of the wind rendered clear and distinct—in short, the whole scene imparted an impression of melancholy, the effects of which the travellers were unable to resist. They stopped from an impulse of respect, uncertain whether they should remain where they were, or should join in the mournful train.

They proceeded along the side of the rocks, and determined to adopt the latter course; they hastened by a short turning, and soon found themselves in the middle of the road, by which the procession must necessarily pass. They distinguished a superb *cataletto*, borne by four men clad in white, on which a man was laid, with his face uncovered, his hands crossed on his breast, and holding a chaplet of flowers. Behind the *cataletto* walked a venerable old Monk; his bald head here and there scattered with a few hairs of silvered whiteness, and the profound grief imprinted on his countenance, inspired respect and compassion. He rested upon the arms of two other Monks, and appeared scarce able to support himself.

The travellers, after having eagerly sought Father Carlo among the Celestins who formed the procession, without being able to find him, enquired of one of them, in a low voice, whether he remained behind in the monastery.

"They are the mortal remains of Father Carlo," answered the Monk, in sorrowful accents, "we are now accompanying to the silent tomb. Father Genaro, whom you behold there," added he, pointing to the venerable old man they had already remarked, "the depositary of his last will, executes it by burving the body of his virtuous friend in a vault, where already reposes that of a Nun of San Cipriano."

The travellers, extremely affected at what they heard, could not restrain their tears; they followed the procession, which entered a vault, but by a path opposite to that which led to the Grotto. The prodigious quantity of tapers which enlightened the walls of this gloomy receptacle—the echoes of the steps of those who carried them—their solemn hymns, tendered still more sonorous by the vaulted roofs, which reverberated every note, excited in the soul an impression of awe and sacred terror, which the most insensible must in vain have attempted to resist.

a Lady asked a gentleman
if she was a blank sheet
what would he write on
her (he replied love & beauty

Arrived at the tomb of Virginia, the Monks knelt down while the *cataletto* was placed in the midst of them. The travellers then distinguished the features of Eugenio; he appeared like one in a profound sleep, his countenance was expressive of a celestial tranquillity, and a sweet smile beamed upon his lips. Father Genaro advanced in silence, and for some minutes contemplated his unfortunate friend; then covering with an eternal veil that face he had so often seen imprinted with grief and despair, he gave full vent to his sorrow, and retired, while the holy Monks deposited his inanimate corpse in the tomb of Virginia.

The travellers could no longer support so sad and heart-rending a spectacle, and immediately pursued the road to Urbino.

They walked with slow and pensive steps, listened with attention, while their souls melted at the melancholy chants of the Monks as they returned to their Monastery, and the echoes prolonged the vibration of the funeral bell, and repeated to the distant hills its awful and

SOLEMN SOUND.

ON READING.

BY THE LATE EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ.

[*From his Posthumous Works.*]

"READING is to the mind," said the duke of Vivonne to Lewis XIV. "what your partridges are to my chops." It is in fact the nourishment of the mind —for by reading we know our Creator, his work, ourselves chiefly, and our fellow-creatures. But this nourishment is easily converted into poison. Salmasius had read as much as Grotius, perhaps more.—But their different modes of reading made the one an enlightened philosopher—and the other, to speak plainly, a pedant puffed up with an useless erudition. Let us read with method, and propose to ourselves an end to which all our studies may point. Through neglect of this rule, gross ignorance often disgraces great readers, who by skipping hastily and irregularly from one subject to another, render themselves

incapable of combining their ideas. So many detached parcels of knowledge cannot form a whole. The inconstancy weakens the energies of the mind, creates in it a dislike to application, and even robs it of the advantages of natural good sense.

Yet let us avoid the contrary extreme, and respect method, without rendering ourselves its slaves. While we propose an end in our reading, let not this end be too remote, and when once we have attained it, let our attention be directed to a different subject. Inconstancy weakens the understanding; a long and exclusive application to a single object hardens and contracts it. Our ideas no longer change easily into a different channel, and the course of reading, to which we have not too long accustomed ourselves, is the only one that we can pursue with pleasure. The use of our reading is to aid us in thinking. The perusal of a particular work gives birth, perhaps, to ideas unconnected with the subject of which it treats. I wish to pursue these ideas—they withdraw me from my proposed plan of reading, and throw me into a new track, and from thence, perhaps, into a second and a third. At length I begin to perceive whither my researches tend: this result, perhaps, may be profitable; it is worth while to try; whereas, had I followed the high road, I should not have been able at the end of my long journey to retrace the progress of my thoughts.

This plan of reading is not applicable to our early studies, since the severest method is scarcely sufficient to make us conceive objects altogether new. Neither can it be adopted by those who read in order to write, and ought to dwell on this subject till they have sounded its depths. These reflections however, I do not absolutely warrant, on the supposition that they are just; they may be so, perhaps, for myself only. The constitution of minds differs like that of bodies: the same regimen will not suit all. Each individual ought to study his own.

To read with attention, exactly to define the expressions of our author, never to admit a conclusion without comprehending its reason, often to pause, reflect, and interrogate ourselves; these are so many advices which it is easy to give, but difficult to follow. The same may be said of that almost evangelical maxim of forgetting friends, country, religion, of giving merit its due praise, and embracing truth wherever it is to be found.

But what ought we to read? Each individual must answer this question for himself agreeably to the object of his studies. The only general precept that I would venture to give, is that of *Pliny*, "to read much rather than many things,"—to make a careful selection of the best works, and to render them familiar to us by attentive and repeated perusals. Without expatiating on the authors so generally known and approved, I would simply observe, that in matters of reasoning, the best are those who have augmented the number of useful truths, who have discovered truths of whatever nature they may be. Such authors increase the number of our ideas, and even their mistakes are useful to their successors.

In works of fancy, invention ought to bear away the palm, chiefly that invention which creates a new kind of writing; and next, that which displays the charms of novelty in its subject, characters, situations, pictures, thoughts, and sentiments. Yet this invention will miss its effect, unless it be accompanied with a genius capable of adapting itself to every variety of the subject; successively sublime, pathetic, flowery, majestic and playful; and with a judgment which admits nothing indecorous, and a style which expresses well whatever *ought* to be said. As to compilations which are intended merely to treasure up the thoughts of others, I ask whether they are written with perspicuity, whether superfluities are lopped off and dispersed, observations skillfully collected, and agreeably to my answers to those questions, I estimate the merit of such performances.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE WRITINGS OF MARY WOOLLSTONCRAFT GODWIN.

(From Travels into Sweden, Norway and Denmark.)

AFFECTION.

NATURE is the nurse of sentiment,—the true source of taste;—yet what misery, as well as rapture, is produced by a quick perception of the beautiful and sublime, when it is exercised in observing animated nature, when every beauteous feeling and emotion excites responsive sympa-

thy, and the harmonized soul sinks into melancholy, or rises to extacy, just as the chords are touched, like the Æolian harp agitated by the changing wind. But how dangerous is it to foster these sentiments in such an imperfect state of existence; and how difficult to eradicate them when an affection for mankind, a passion for an individual, is but the unfolding of that love which embraces all that is great and beautiful.

When a warm heart has received strong impressions, they are not to be effaced. Emotions become sentiments; and the imagination renders even transient sensations permanent, by fondly retracing them. I cannot without a thrill of delight, recollect views I have seen, which are not to be forgotten,—nor looks I have felt in every nerve which I shall never more meet. The grave has closed over a dear friend, the friend of my youth; still she is present with me, and I hear her soft voice warbling as I stray over the heath. Fate has separated me from another, the fire of whose eyes, tempered by infantine tenderness, still warms my breast; even when gazing on these tremendous cliffs, sublime emotions absorb my soul. And, smile not, if I add, that the rosy tint of morning reminds me of a suffusion which will never more charm my senses, unless it re-appears on the cheeks of my child. Her sweet blushes I may yet hide in my bosom, and she is still too young to ask why starts the tear, so near a-kin to pleasure and pain.

SPECTACLES OF MORTALITY AT TONSBERG.

In its church there is a little recess full of coffins, which contains bodies embalmed long since—so long, that there is not even a tradition to lead to a guess at their names.

A desire of preserving the body seems to have prevailed in most countries of the world, futile as it is to term it a preservation, when the noblest parts are immediately sacrificed merely to save the muscles, skin and bone from rottenness. When I was shewn these human petrifactions, I shrunk back with disgust and horror. "Ashes to ashes!" thought I—Dust to dust!"—If this be not dissolution, it is something worse than natural decay—It is treason against humanity, thus to lift up the awful veil which would fain hide its weakness. The grandeur of the active principle is never more strongly felt than at such a sight; for nothing is so ugly as the human form when de-

prived of life, and thus dried into stone, merely to preserve the most disgusting image of death. The contemplation of noble ruins produces a melancholy that exalts the mind.—We take a retrospect of the exertions of man, the fate of empires and their rulers; and marking the grand destruction of ages, it seems the necessary change of time leading to improvement.—Our very soul expands, and we forget our littleness; how painfully brought to our recollection by such vain attempts to snatch from decay what is destined so soon to perish. Life, what art thou? Where goes this breath? this, *I*, so much alive? In what element will it mix, giving or receiving fresh energy?—What will break the enchantment of animation?—For worlds, I would not see a form I loved—embalmed in my heart, thus sacrilegiously handled!—Pugh! my stomach turns.—Is this all the distinction of the rich in the grave?—They had better quickly allow the scythe of equality to mow them down with the common mass, than struggle to become a monument of the instability of human greatness.

The teeth, nails, and skin were whole, without appearing black like the Egyptian mummies; and some silk, in which they had been wrapt, still preserved its colour, pink, with tolerable freshness.

I could not learn how long the bodies had been in this state, in which they bid fair to remain till the day of judgment; and, before that time, it will require some trouble to make them fit to appear in company with angels, without disgracing humanity.—God bless you; I feel a conviction that we have some perfectible principle in our present vestment, which will not be destroyed just as we begin to be sensible of the improvement; and I care not what habit it next puts on, sure that it will be wisely formed to suit a higher state of existence. Thinking of death makes us tenderly cling to our affections—with more than usual tenderness, I therefore assure you that I am your's, wishing that the temporary death of absence may not endure longer than is absolutely necessary.

SENSIBILITY.

Tonsberg was formerly the residence of one of the little sovereigns of Norway, and on an adjacent mountain the vestiges of a fort remain, which was battered down by the Swedes; the entrance of the bay laying close to it.

Here I have frequently strayed, sovereign of the waste, I seldom met any human creature; and sometimes, reclining on the mossy down, under the shelter of a rock, the prattling of the sea amongst the pebbles has lulled me to sleep—no fear of any rude satyr's approaching to interrupt my repose. Balmy were the slumbers, and soft the gales that refreshed me, when I awoke to follow, with an eye vaguely curious, the white sails as they turned the cliffs, or seemed to take shelter under the pines which covered the little islands that so gracefully rose to render the terrific ocean beautiful. The fishermen were calmly casting their nets; whilst the sea-gulls hovered over the unruffled deep. Every thing seemed to harmonize into tranquillity—even the mournful call of the bittern was in cadence with the tinkling bells on the necks of the cows, that, pacing slowly one after the other, along an inviting path in the vale below, were repairing to the cottages to be milked. With what ineffable pleasure have I not gazed—and gazed again, losing my breath through my eyes—my very soul diffused itself in the scene—and, seeming to become all senses, glided in the scarcely-agitated waves, melted in the freshening breeze, or, taking its flight with fairy wing, to the misty mountains which bounded the prospect, fancy tript over new lawns, more beautiful even than the lovely slopes on the winding shore before me.—I pause again, breathless, to trace, with renewed delight, sentiments which entranced me, when, turning my humid eyes from the expanse below to the vault above, my sight pierced the fleecy clouds that softened the azure brightness; and imperceptibly recalling the reveries of childhood, I bowed before the awful throne of my Creator, whilst I rested on its footstool.

You have sometimes wondered, my dear friend, at the extreme affection of my nature—But such is the temperature of my soul—It is not the vivacity of youth, the heyday of existence. For years have I endeavoured to calm an impetuous tide—labouring to make my feelings take an orderly course.—It was striving against the stream.—I must love and admire with warmth, or I sink into sadness. Tokens of love which I have received have wrapt me in elysium—purifying the heart they inchanted.—My bosom still glows.—Do not saucily ask, repeating Sterne's question, "Maria, is it still so warm?" Sufficiently, O my

God! has it been chilled by sorrow and unkindness—still nature will prevail—and if I blush at recollecting past enjoyment, it is the rosy hue of pleasure heightened by modesty; for the blush of modesty and shame are as distinct as the emotions by which they are produced.

INHUMANITY.

During my present journey, and whilst residing in France, I have had an opportunity of peeping behind the scenes of what are vulgarly termed great affairs, only to discover the mean machinery which has directed many transactions of moment. The sword has been merciful, compared with the depredations made on human life by contractors, and by the swarm of locusts who have battened on the pestilence they spread abroad. These men, like the owners of negro ships, never smell on their money the blood by which it has been gained, but sleep quietly in their beds, terming such occupations *lawful callings;* yet the lightning marks not their roofs, to thunder conviction on them, "and to justify the ways of God to man."

Why should I weep for myself;—"Take, O world! thy much indebted tear!"

THE CASTLE DE WARRENNE.

SLOW and heavily the bell of the great clock in the turret tolled out three: the gloomy mists of night were gradually dispersing, while a faint yellow, tinging the eastern hemisphere, already indicated the approach of day.—Matilda started from her couch yet wet with tears, and which had that night afforded her but broken and imperfect slumbers. Fearing that she had exceeded the appointed time, she hastily arrayed herself in her simple habit, and, bending mournfully over the bed of the yet sleeping Raymond, bestowed innumerable kisses on his dimpled mouth.

"Sweet babe!" cried she in an agony of tears: "perhaps I for the last time view thy lovely countenance!—no longer shall I receive pleasure from thy innocent endearments! Oh! why does Virtue demand this painful sacrifice!——My dear Lady, too—all—all lost!!"

Again she pressed her lips to those of the child, who opened his eyes, and, fixing them on Matilda, smiled sweetly. The smile undid all her resolution; and, seating herself by his side, she soothed him with her accustomed tenderness, heedless of the passing time. The clock again reminded her of her tardiness, and with reluctance she replaced the child; and, casting a mournful look round her little apartment, departed.

With trembling steps and perturbed heart she descended the great staircase. All was yet profoundly still. At the appointed spot she met Jaques, who waited (faithful to the trust reposed in him) to open the gate for her.

"Alack! Matilda," said he, brushing away an involuntary tear with the sleeve of his coat, "are you, then, determined to quit us? Sorrowful will be the day to us poor servants! Don't you remember the many merry dances we have had in this hall, and how jealous Claude and Felix used to be, when you gave me your hand in preference?"

"Yes!" said Matilda, raising her eyes to Heaven with fervor——"think not that I shall ever forget the many happy days I have passed under this roof. But do not my best friend, endeavour to alter, by your lamentation, a determination you so well know the necessity of."

"But, surely, Matilda," said Jaques, "you will not *now* be so coy as to deny me a parting salute!"

Matilda smiled through her undried tears, and, giving him her hand, said——

"Receive my thanks for your kind services. Day now breaks on apace: I must bid you adieu. I well know that it is needless for me to bid you remember Matilda."

Jaques took a purse from his pocket, and, pressing it into her hand, said——

"Accept this, my dear girl: when the contents are expended, the purse will remain as a small token of remembrance."

She assured him that the liberality of her Lady had rendered his gift unnecessary; but, rather than hurt his generous spirit, she accepted it. He then softly, though unwillingly, opened the door, and, again bidding her a tender adieu, closed it after her.

She tripped nimbly across the lawn, but her heart did not keep pace with the swiftness of her feet. When she had travelled about three quarters of a mile, tired and breathless, she threw herself upon the grass, and with tearful eyes contemplated the distant battlements of Warrenne Castle.

Matilda, at this period, had just completed her fourteenth year. Her figure was elegantly formed, and though it had not yet attained its perfect stature, was nevertheless far from contemptible. Her complexion, exquisitely fair, was admirably contrasted with a profusion of chesnut-coloured hair, which fell in careless ringlets over her forehead and bosom. Her eyes were bright and piercing, and the contraction of the eyes at the temples gave an expression of archness highly fascinating. Her dress consisted of a grey camlet jacket and petticoat, neatly bound with black ribbon, which served to exhibit to advantage her fine shape. A net fillet confined the superfluous hair, over which was tied a little black chip hat; and a pair of blue silk mittens completed her dress, at once simple and becoming.

Such was the person of our little heroine, as she sunk fatigued and exhausted upon the turf. Her little bundle, containing her change of linen, she disengaged from her arm, and for a few moments freely indulged in an extravagance of grief: then, more composed and refreshed, she rose and pursued her solitary journey.

The parents of Matilda were poor industrious peasants in the province of Chantilly, whose only pleasurable relaxation from labour was in the infantile sports of their darling girl. As her personal attractions daily increased, her mind proportionably expanded; and her eagerness for instruction far exceeded their means of gratification. One accomplishment it was in their power to afford her:—— Matilda had a sweetly plaintive voice, and warbled the little rustic airs with peculiar grace. The saving of a twelvemonths economy were expended in the purchase of a lute, on which a neighbouring cottager instructed her to play and in a short time perceived that his pretty pupil made such rapid progress in the wonder-working science, as to attract the notice of every passing traveller. On an evening when her allotted household task was finished, she usually seated herself upon the massy bench at the door

of their hut, and played madrigals for the amusement of her young village conpanions, who thronged delighted around her.

On one of these occasions, the cheerful party were dispersed by the approach of a carriage, containing a lady and gentleman. Matilda, abashed, put up her lute, and was returning into the cottage; when the lady, perceiving, and struck with her appearance, beckoned her to them.—Trembling, with modest timidity, Matilda approached, and, courtsying respectfully, requested to know if she should procure them any refreshment.

The lady regarded her attentively, and demanded her name, with several other questions, which she answered with less embarrassment. Pleased with her manner, the strangers alighted; and, after taking some fruit and milk, made her an offer to accompany them back in their carriage to view the Castle.

Elated with the prospect of such a distinguished honour, it was accepted by the humble family with a profusion of thanks; and Matilda, delighted with the grandeur of her new company, gladly repaired with them to Warrenne Castle. Lady De Warrenne, charmed with the person and behaviour of her lovely guest, felt unwilling ro relinquish her, and with some little difficulty prevailed upon the simple cottagers to permit her attendance upon little Raymond.

Sir Arthur De Warrenne had been a firm adherent to the cause of his Sovereign, John. Some domestic concerns had obliged him to desert his paternal estate in Ireland, and fix his residence in France. His unshaken fidelity to his Monarch, though exerted in a bad cause, could not but reflect honour on his character, as firm allegiance should ever distinguish a courtier. He possessed generosity and valour, but at the same time gave way to an impetuosity of temper which rendered him unfit to bear disappointment or contradiction: pride, avarice, and ambition, were his predominant passions.

Early in life he received the hand of an amiable and accomplished woman; but as no children were likely to crown his wishes, not even the amiable disposition of his wife could prevent him from treating her with the grossest disrespect; and his temper, always irritable, received additional mortification from the grievous disappointment.

Indulging his spleen one day in a solitary ramble, he perceived at the foot of a tree a large parcel: stooping to take a nearer view, his surprise was extreme to observe it agitated with a gentle motion; and, raising it with his hand, found it to contain an infant boy wrapped in costly cloaths. Upon unfolding the cloth with which it was enveloped, he found it to contain a necklace and cross, of considerable value; with a note, which he instantly opened, in which were these words:—

"Should Providence direct any one hither ere this unfortunate babe has breathed his last, let pity plead in their breast for the innocent victim of pride and tyranny!—one born of noble blood, though driven by persecution to this fate. A time may come when its wretched parents shall dare to claim their Raymond.——Till then oh! stranger, be thou his protector!—Heaven will be thy reward.

Sir Arthur mused some time upon the strangeness of the event. His humanity, actuated also by some secret motives, inspired him with a resolution highly favourable to the abandoned infant. Despairing of having a natural heir to his ample possessions, he determined to adopt Raymond for his son. Filled with this intention, as resolute as sudden, he carried the child home, and presented it to his lady, relating the adventure, and insisting upon her receiving it as her own.

Ever accustomed to implicit obedience, Lady De Warrenne gave an immediate consent, notwithstanding her own misfortune more powerfully affected her, at the idea of fostering in her bosom a child of unknown origin. The innocent and engaging looks of the infant soon reconciled her to the necessity, and in a short time her affection for it was little short of what it would have been, had it in reality possessed a natural claim to her love.

It was at this time Sir Arthur and his lady met with Matilda, in the manner related. It instantly occurred to them, that her assistance would be of material service to lighten the fatigue Lady De Warrenne experienced in her indefatigable attendance upon Raymond. Sir Arthur, whose good humour had lately been unbounded, joined in the wish, and Matilda returned with them.

At first, her youthful fancy, dazzled with the prospect of

living in such splendour, readily acquiesced in their request; but, upon sight of the large antique Castle, with its mouldering walls and heavy iron gates, her courage failed, and she heartily repented her rashness in quiting the pretty pleasant cottage of Leonard and Pauline. Time, however, at length reconciled her to her situation; she soon loved little Raymond with the most lively affection, and for some time her happiness was unbounded.

The death of Pauline was the first real affliction her gay and artless bosom had ever experienced, and she mourned her loss with true filial piety. Lady De Warrenne generously defrayed the expences of the funeral, and presented Matilda with the mourning before described. The first grief being at length subsided, she began to regain her accustomed gaiety. Her vivacity and good humour endeared her to all the domestics, and the praises of Matilda were sounded from every tongue.

Her felicity was to prove but of short duration. Those charms which are erroneously supposed productive of happiness to the possessor, were, in reality, to her the sources of misfortune.

The engaging child soon expanded into the lovely woman, and Sir Arthur found a passion glowing in his breast stronger than *humanity*. Ever ardent and impetuous in his projects, he hesitated not to make her acquainted with the sentiments she had inspired; entreating, nay demanding, a return, as a compensation for the obligations she was under to him.

Poor Matilda heard him with a look of horror and astonishment. She rushed from his presence, in spite of his efforts to detain her, with detestation strongly depicted upon her expressive countenance. Hastened to her chamber, she flung herself upon her knees, and with uplifted hands implored the Almighty protection. She rose inspired with fortitude and resignation, and debated with herself what plan to pursue.

The penetrating eyes of Lady De Warrenne soon discovered her uneasiness, and with maternal tenderness pressed to know the cause. Unable to reply, she shunned her presence. Again Sir Arthur met her, and, seizing her hand, forcibly demanded her detention. She screamed with affright, and with a sudden spring disengaged herself

from his grasp. Sir Arthur, his countenance distorted with rage, muttered, as she fled, that—if entreaty and gentle methods could not prevail with her, force should compel her to accede to his wishes.

She was tottering on the staircase, overcome with dread; a faint sickness came over her; her eyes and limbs refused their office; and she fell from the top to the bottom.—— When she recovered, she found herself in the arms of Jacques, whose honest heart, sympathizing in her distress, prompted him to give her all the assistance in his power.— She imparted, in confidence, to him her situation; adding that she would rather herself experience the greatest calamity, than give pain to her Lady, by making her acquainted with the baseness of Sir Arthur; for which reason she determined secretly to quit the Castle, and return to her father, to whom she might be of service in his declining years.

The generosity of Lady De Warrenne having supplied her so liberally as to satisfy her present wants, for the future she trusted to her own cheerful industry. Jaques, though deeply struck with the sense of her virtue, offered some objection, to no purpose: she was positively fixed in her laudable design: and, after gaining him over to her interest in the manner related, quitted the Castle De Warrenne.

Matilda reached her father's cottage just as the sun withdrew its last ray. The inhabitants of the village were all retired within their huts; and the stiliness of the scene around increased the gloom of her spirits. She approached their humble mansion——the door was closed——it was unusual——and her heart beat high with apprehension.—— With a fluttering hand she raised the latch, and beheld the venerable Leonard seated in an arm-chair, supported by cushions. In an instant she was at his feet.

"Ah! Matilda," said he, in a feeble voice, "I feared I should never see thee more! But, what means this sudden return?"

Matilda could not speak: she pressed his hand to her lips, and, hiding her face in his lap, sobbed bitterly.

"Matilda," exclaimed Leonard, drawing her still nearer to his heart, I am dying——I shall soon join my sainted Pauline."

"Oh! my father," cried Matilda, "do not say so—— what will become of your child? She will not have a friend on earth, when you are gone, to supply your loss."

She then explained to him her situation. He heard her with astonishment; and when she had finished, he clasped his arms round her, and exclaimed, with emotion——

"Fear not my child—Heaven will reward your virtue. Trust to that Providence which has hitherto never deserted you. It gives me great satisfaction to find that the meanness of thy education has not obscured the lustre of thy birth."

Matilda, surprised at his words, interrogated him as to their meaning.

"It is useless, my child," said he, "to conceal the truth from you; the period approaches when all deception must end: know then, Matilda, you are not my daughter. —I once was servant to a nobleman of distinguished merit; my faithful services endeared me both to him and my lady, who ever distinguished me from the rest of their domestics; and, when I courted Pauline, they portioned her, and settled me in the cottage where I have dwelt ever since. My lord died soon after I quitted his service.— Alack! then, there were sad doings! his brother, a man cruel and imperious, came to the castle, and forcibly took possession of the estate; accusing my lady of holding criminal intercourse with one of the domestics, by that means attempting to prove the infant illegitimate; but, at the same time, pretending to compassionate her, on account of her youth and beauty, he had sent her to a nunnery, where, in all probability, she has long since ended her days.

(To be continued.)

Song.

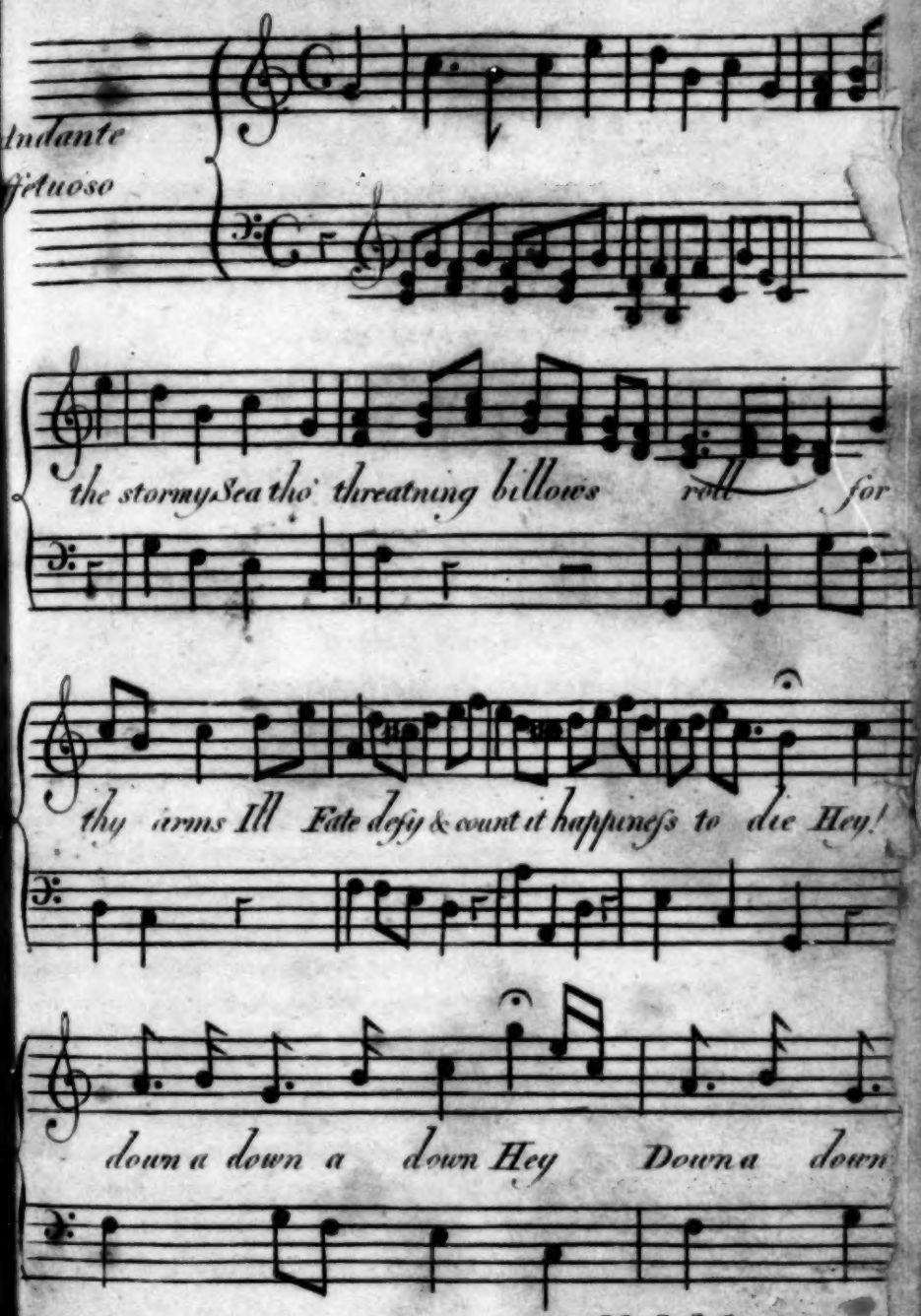
UNMOV'D I'LL BRAVE THE STORMY SEA.

Unmov'd I'll brave the stormy sea,
Tho' threat'ning billows roll,
For William, ah! my love with thee,
No fear can daunt my soul.
Bless'd in thy arms I'll fate defy,
And count it happiness to die.
Hey! down a down a down hey, &c.

When on the foreign shore we land,
No foe shall me affright,
Still by William will I stand
And cheer him to the fight:
Be living seen when all is sped
Or found together mid the dead.
Hey down, &c.

But cheerly William, yet my love,
Danger shall fly us far;
A guardian angel sits above,
To shield us in the war:
Return'd, then safe our country sav'd,
We'll sing the perils we have brav'd.
Hey down, &c.

Unmov'd I



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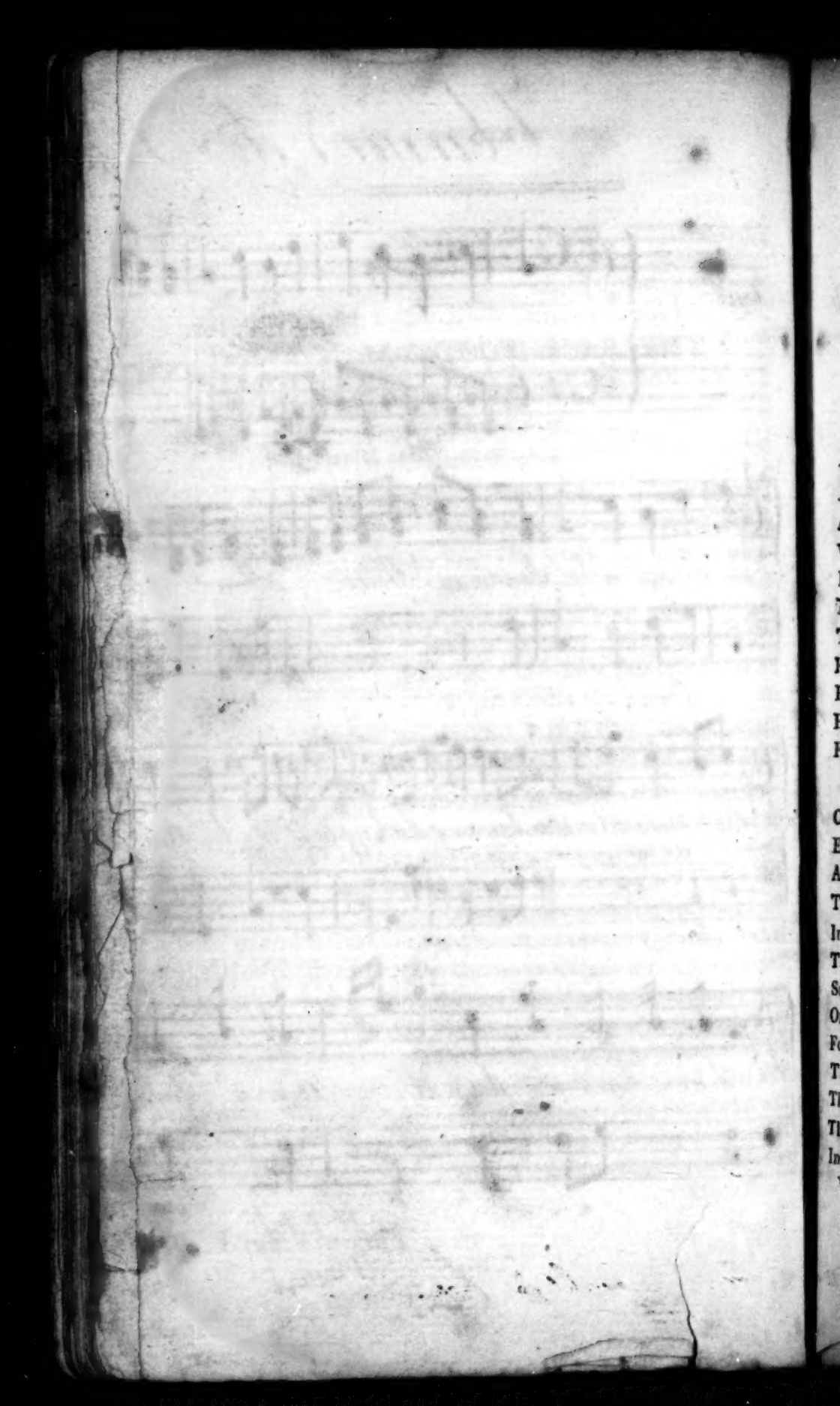

POETRY.

THE BACK-WOODS' MAN;

AN AMERICAN ECLOGUE.

BY G. WALKER,

SCENE: *The Wilderness of Kentucky. Time, Morning.*

NIGHT far to westward mov'd her silent way,
And rising glory blaz'd in early day;
When from an hill, whose lofty head supplied
Extent of vision, (by the plain denied)
The wandering Vernon paus'd, awhile to trace
The devious journey of the daily chace.
His belt, a shot and powder-flask contain'd,
His leaning arm a rifle piece sustain'd;
His hat, which screen'd from scorching sun his head,
From black, was died by various seasons red.

Ethereal rose the breath of night around,
Or hung in brilliant spangles o'er the ground,
Engreen'd the foliage with a fresher hue,
And steep'd the pea-vines in a pearly dew.
The gaudy tulip arching o'er his head,
In lofty grandeur various blossoms spread.
The waving maple sugar'd sweets distill'd,
Such sweets as canes in Indian climates yield.
On hickery boughs the *mocking warbler* play'd,
For ever changing as he careless stray'd:
The larks loud chorus first he nobly tried,
The thrush, the plover, each in turn he vied.
The humming bird, in gold-shot plumage dress'd,
In busy fluttering, humble joy express'd,

Night far advanced

O'er tufted cotton wav'd its downy way,
Or paus'd, in woodbine flowers awhile to play.

Immense, behind, submerg'd in clouds of blue,
The Appalachians rose sublime in view:
Sublime in awful height, aloft they rear'd
Their frowning heads, and in mid-heaven appear'd.
Here Vernon stood. While far as sight could bound,
A verdant ocean undulated round;
And where the sky seem'd rising from the plain,
A silver river held its watery reign;
In rich translucence, grandly roll'd along,
Its tribute echo, and a sylvan song.
Here old Arcadia seem'd again to bloom,
And past'ral fragrance shed a fresh perfume.
Here unseen spirits might delighted rove
By secret waters in the twilight grove.
Or o'er the sward, for ever green and gay,
Disporting frolic in the sun-beams ray;
Sleep amidst flowers or by the soft cascade,
Breathe themes of love, to charm some list'ning maid.
All nature smil'd, for man, destructive man,
His devastations had not yet began.

A struggling sigh escap'd the wanderer's breast,
As thus he gaz'd, and thus his thoughts exprest.
"Rise, rise ye hills, in tenfold horror rise:
Uplift your summits to the boundless skies:
Bar man for ever from these realms of peace,
Where silence dwells, where nature smiles increase:
No—rather hold asylum to distress
And in your secret shades the vagrant bless.
Ye solemn woods, with living verdure deck'd,
The flying stranger in your arms protect;
From hostile climes, where want oppressive reigns,
He seeks compassion in your kindred plains."

" Here in the wild, what people yet unborn,
With towns and temples shall these lands adorn;
Where brakes and thickets lodge the crested snake,
Exulting cities into being wake.
Another Athens, and another Rome,
Shall rear the column, and exalt the dome;
The arts again in deserts shall resound,
And commerce spread her ample stores around.
But ah! this vision must progreffive fade;
Ambition, pride, and avarice shall invade.
For earth nor knows throughout her varied clime,
Repose or peace within the lapse of time.
These plains shall smoke, empurpl'd deep with gore,
Virgins shall weep, and murder'd youth deplore;
These lands with human carnage shall be fed,
Matrons shall wail and mingle with the dead:
Devouring flames the crashing towns destroy,
And mad, impassioned man shall leap for joy.

" Why then," he cried, " do I thus idly roam,
Forlorn and useless from a peaceful home?
Since want and misery thro' this mortal state,
Attend our footsteps with malignant hate.
Why for my sport lay low the bounding deer;
Why check the painted plover's glad career?
Why not return to share the envy'd lot
Of love and plenty in the sacred cot?
It may be now, while careless here I stray,
Unpitying Indians drag my sons away:
Perhaps my cottage feeds the rising fire,
Perhaps in flames my tender love's expire!
Ah me! what if within the matted brake,
I rouse the anger of the rat'ling snake?
What if in ambush roaming Indians lie,
Alone, unnoticed, in the wild I die:

Or lost in wildering mazes, I may tread
The haunts where Famine rears her pallid head."

Chill'd with cool horror, silent and aghast,
His pensive eye the howling wild repass'd.
Domestic pleasures each successive rise,
And tears pathetic trickle from his eyes.
" This hour shall mark my undelay'd return,
And ye, my wife, my babes, no more shall mourn,"
He said—when rushing sounds attract his ear,
Before him fleetly dash'd a bounding deer.
His flushing blood beat quicker at the sight,
The joyful chase demanded all his might:
He sprang exultant thro' the opening glade,
Pursued with ardour midst the deepest shade.
The flying deer thro' thickets tore his way,
Urg'd thro' the gloom, and left behind the day;
The doubl'ing lab'rinths trod with burning feet:
Than sound more swift, than driving winds more fleet.
The hunter onward, rapid, rapid bore,
The closing boughs distain'd his face with gore;
The sward scarce felt him as he forward flew,
The ground receding press'd him to pursue
Now seen, now lost, mov'd on the panting foe,
The panting hunter's steps became more slow.
Involv'd and tangl'd in a brake of cane,
Pursuit was over, for pursuit was vain.
Restrain'd by meshes interwove with briar,
He chafes in vain, in vain consumes his fire;
His foe escap'd, himself a prisoner bound,
He moves reluctant o'er the matted ground.
Impervious brakes appear on every side,
Intangled canes his utmost force deride.
The glad'ning sun had hasten'd down the sky,
The moon unseen had hung her orb on high.

Night in his garment, sable, blank, and drear,
No ray supplied the wand'rer's steps to cheer:
A gloomy darkness wove amongst the trees,
And horror chilly crept along the breeze.
Cold, hungry, tir'd, despair benumbing ran
Thro' all his veins----when thus the angry man:
Why! Why, he cried, does heaven malignant throw
Its furiate shafts on grov'ling man below?
Why form a being ever prone to wrong,
Whose lengthen'd life his sufferings but prolong?
Strike here ye fates! pour down your tardy death,
Resume my life, and take my weary breath.
Is there a man who breathes this baleful earth,
Who feels not varied sorrows from his birth?
Is there a wretch beneath th' inclement sky,
Whose better portion would not be to die?"

While thus he spoke amidst the shades of night,
A wav'ring blaze burst on his eager sight;
A rising fire by Indian warriors pil'd,
Shed glad refulgence thro' the dreary wild:
Around they smok'd, in ghastly order spread,
A skin their garment, and the grass their bed.
A female pris'ner, with a bandage tied,
Sat near---two children weeping by her side.
With cautious pace the trembling Vernon mov'd,
For latent death a cautious pace behov'd.
In foliage hid---his shrinking senses know
His wife, his children, sad compeers in woe,
He rears his rifle---strait th' unerring ball
Bids death in darkness on the nearest fall
Again prepar'd, the shot in thunder flies,
A second hero, grasping, pants, and dies.
A third receiv'd the vengeance in his breast,
And fright, and fear, and horror seiz'd the rest.
A whist'ling bullet random rush'd along,
And smarting wounds pursued the flying throng.

His wife unbound---his children round him press'd
His wife, his children, were by turns caress'd.
"No more, he cried, in search of danger I
Will tempt the forest, or new regions try;
Could I require from heav'n's protecting care,
That safety which my hand was form'd to bear?
Ah me! I see that man alone is blind,
By Heav'n directed with affection kind.
Like me, mankind from truth and virtue stray,
And leave their better part to vice a prey:
Resolv'd to turn, temptation leaps before,
The heart bounds on, and judgment is no more:
When caught in toils that closely press, we cry
To Heav'n for help, or Providence deny.
But even then, when hope nor help is near,
Benignant mercy may our anguish hear,
From present ill eventual good provide,
To all who in this guardian care confide,
Then come my spouse---proceed my children dear,
And home once more with sheltering roof shall cheer."
He said, and onward thro' the tangled road
They joyous mov'd to find their lov'd abode.

LINES

SENT TO A YOUNG LADY.

GO, idle paper, to the maid
Whose charms have taught my anxious breast,
That Love may every heart invade,
And tranquil minds deprive of rest.
Go then, and while thy lines are reading,
For me be kindly interceding.

Tell her I live but in her smiles—
Tho' true—she never smil'd on me;
But Hope and Love with flattering wiles,
Lead me those fancied smiles to see:
Smiles of *contempt* perhaps now rising,
The lines and writer both despising.

Go, happy paper, fearless go,
Nor dread the *flames* that thee await;
Flames in thy master's bosom glow,
Then why shouldst thou lament thy fate.
Go, from her hands receive thine ending,
Off'ring to Love—in flames ascending.

But should she read, and lay thee by,
Be sure her breast can kindness feel,
Ah! couldst thou read it in her eye,
For thou wouldst ne'er the glance reveal.
Go then, and to her heart appealing,
Nought that I doubt or hope concealing.

Bear then thy master's message straight;
Say much I love—say much I fear—
Say that her frowns, contempt, and hate,
Are what I cannot, could not bear.
Say that without her, life's no blessing,
No endearment worth possessing.

THE EASY LOVER.

1

COME love me, cried *Colin*, one day, to his lass,
Why frown you thus always upon me?
For if my dear girl, you'd but look in your glass,
You'd see that those frowns don't become ye.

Beside, let me tell ye, tho' great be my love,
'Tis kindness alone can support it:
And if you thus always by frowning reprove,
I must fly, and by absence retort it.

2.

Away! replied *Chloe*, who wants you to stay?
Go, go, and no never come nigh me;
I'm sure when your present, I wish you away,
To retort on my heart I defy ye.
I'll frown when I please, and I'll smile when I chuse,
And to you it shall ne'er be accounted:
So go and tell *Rose*, that your love I refuse,
With her you perhaps may surmount it.

3

I thank you, said *Colin;* I'll take your advice,
For *Rose* is as handsome as you be;
And since you refuse me for reasons so nice,
Longer sighing would mark me a booby.
Beside if she's pretty, she also has wit,
To know when to take what love offers.
What says the old proverb? when one don't befit,
To another then tender your proffers.